

Turkey expels British journalist

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Turkey has decided to expel a British journalist for his "prejudiced" reporting about Turkish involvement in the relief operation conducted by the U.S.-led allied troops, the foreign ministry spokesman said on Friday. Spokesman Murat Sungar said Robert Fisk, the Middle East correspondent of the British newspaper The Independent, would be expelled Friday. "His existence in Turkey is no longer needed because of his prejudiced, biased and ill-intentioned reporting," Sungar said. Fisk was detained on Thursday after writing a story that Turkish troops were ransacking aid supplies intended for refugees. He wrote that the alleged thievery had led to a standoff between Turkish and British troops. The Turkish government has also withdrawn the credentials of several other independent reporters. A British embassy spokesman said Fisk was released Friday and was on his way to Ankara to catch the first available flight out of the country.

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Sudanese opposition rejects amnesty

CAIRO (R) — Two major Sudanese opposition groups in exile on Friday rejected an amnesty offer by Khartoum's military government and vowed to overthrow it. The Democratic Unionist Party and the Umma Party said in a statement that Sudan's government led by General Omar Hassan Al Bashir had no authority to make the offer, announced on Tuesday, because it had come to power illegitimately. "Who pardons whom? Will the rebel pardon the one who was legitimately elected by the people?" asked the statement issued in Cairo. Bashir led a coup which toppled the democratically-elected government of Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi in June 1989.

ICRC wants laser weapons banned

GENEVA (AP) — The International Committee of the Red Cross is in favour of international legislation banning the use of laser weapons on the battlefield, the organization's president said Friday. Cornelio Sommaruga told reporters that the ICRC was particularly concerned at the growing number of studies into the use of laser-guided weapons to blind enemy targets. He said the ICRC had organized three meetings with international experts to discuss the impact and control of the weapons, but said it will take a long time to devise international law for the situation. The neutral ICRC is the guardian of the Geneva conventions on international humanitarian law in times of armed conflict.

Cyprus to import drinking water

NICOSIA (R) — The government of Cyprus, suffering its worst drought in 20 years, said on Friday it would import drinking water from the Greece island of Crete. It added that feasibility studies have been commissioned for the urgent construction of desalination plants. Water restrictions have been in force for five months throughout the eastern Mediterranean holiday island. Reservoirs are only one-fifth full after 57 per cent of normal rainfall between October and April. A statement issued after a high-level meeting at the presidential palace said there was enough drinking water in the reservoirs to last until January 1992. But since desalination plants cannot be built quickly enough, the government decided to import water from Crete as the only way to secure adequate supplies.

Pope: Aid to 3rd World must go on

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope John Paul II told Sweden's king Friday that aid to rebuild the economies of Eastern Europe must not come at the expense of the Third World. Receiving King Carl XVI Gustaf on a state visit, the Pope said he was worried that help for the former Communist-ruled countries "may lead to a neglect of even more serious and long-standing conditions of poverty" elsewhere. John Paul praised Sweden's commitment to help the Third World, calling it "of great importance to the cause of peace among the peoples of the world."

Famine threatens Somali refugees

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Food supply shortages, poor roads and a sudden influx of half a million people are severely hampering efforts to feed over one million refugees in remote southeastern Ethiopia, relief officials said Friday. Donors have promised half of the 210,000 tons of food needed for the refugees, but very little of that has been delivered, said Paul Mitchell of the Rome-based U.N. World Food Programme. In addition, nearly impassable roads to the camps have made it difficult to distribute the little food available, said Godfrey Sabiti, a representative of the U.N. High Commission for Refugees in Ethiopia. "Right now we are managing, but with difficulties," Sabiti said in a telephone interview.

Baker made 'some progress' — Bush U.S. envoy criticises Jewish settlement

PLO seeks clear Israeli stand

CAIRO (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation will not respond formally to U.S. Middle East peace proposals until Israel makes clear its position on Palestinian representation, a senior PLO official said on Friday.

"We are waiting to hear a final position on Israel's stance on the formation of a Palestinian delegation," PLO executive committee member Mahmoud Abbas told reporters.

Palestinian representation has been a thorny issue in Middle East peace efforts. Abbas did not say whether the PLO wanted a direct role in any peace talks.

"We do not want to go into details that would give Israel pretexts," he said.

Abbas, whose nom de guerre is Abu Mazen, held separate talks on Thursday with Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdul Maguid and President Hosni Mubarak's top political adviser Osama Al Baz. No details emerged from the meetings.

Abbas appeared to give qualified support for U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's plans for a regional conference, rather than an international one advocated by many Arab states, to bring about a lasting peace between Israel and its neighbours.

"We support the peace conference if it is based on international legitimacy," he said.

"What is important is that international legitimacy should be fulfilled in the conference and it should be attended by the concerned parties and the United Nations. Names (of the conference) are not important," he added.

He did not explain what role the PLO wanted the United Nations to play. He said the group remained committed to U.N. resolutions calling for exchanging land for peace — a formula so far rejected by Israel.

The PLO, backed by all Arab countries, insists it is the sole, legitimate representative of Palestinians under Israeli occupation since 1967.

Israel rejects any dealings with the PLO, calling it a terrorist group.

Baker visited the Middle East three times in the last two months to renew U.S. peace diplomacy but has made little progress towards arranging a peace conference or persuading Israel to accept the principle of land for peace.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat said on Wednesday that Baker's attempts were close to collapse because of Israel's hard stance.

"I must be frank with you... (the American plan) is on the point of sinking because of Israel's intransigence and refusal," he told Palestinian workers in a May Day message.

"What will the U.S. administration do now? Will it use against Israel a tiny part of the means it used against Iraq (in the Gulf war)?" asked Arafat.

In Washington, President George Bush said Thursday that Secretary of State James A. Baker had made "some progress" in his Middle East peace mission, but there are no immediate plans to send him back to the region.

But Bush added "that could change any minute."

"I am not pessimistic. I am determined that we are going to be the catalyst in that troubled corner of the world for peace," Bush told reporters.

Asked if the post-Gulf war window of opportunity for a Middle East peace agreement was closing, the president replied, "I don't think it's closing."

"I don't feel that time is running out," said Bush, who conferred with Baker Wednesday on the results of his third trip to the Middle East in the past seven weeks. Bush said he planned to talk with Baker again Thursday evening.

"You don't solve a problem of this complexity overnight. He's making some progress and I wish I could share with you what it is. But when you're dealing in negotiations that are this sensitive, there are some things that are

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By Mariam M. Shahin and agency dispatches

AMMAN (Agencies) — British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd left Amman Friday after a visit which Jordanian officials said opened a new chapter in the two countries' relations.

Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri told reporters after Hurd left for Kuwait the two were in harmony on several issues, including opposing new Israeli settlements in the occupied territories as a danger to the peace process.

"There was an emphasis on our part of the danger of settlement and settlement activities in the occupied territories," Secretary Hurd agreed with us on this issue and other issues," Masri said.

"We found, particularly on the Palestinian question and the Israeli occupation, we enjoyed a lot of common ground," he added. "In spite of the differences in the past... we are opening a new chapter and we will continue economic and political cooperation."

Mr. Hurd met His Majesty King Hussein and other officials.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra said that talks focused on "efforts aimed at solving the Middle East and the Palestinian problems."

The King and Mr. Hurd also discussed bilateral relations, Petra said.

Before leaving for Kuwait, Hurd told reporters at the airport: "It was a very friendly and useful meeting (with the King). As far as I was concerned His Majesty was very kind and we went over really the whole ground of his hopes for the Palestine question, our hopes for the Palestine question, how we want to encourage the American initiative... and we talked about the friendship between Britain and Jordan and how we want to keep it alive and give it freshness (and) new strength."

In unusually harsh criticism of Israel, Hurd said on Thursday its continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip was a "poison" in the Middle East. He said building new settlements jarred with Israel's insistence that it wanted peace.

The West recognises Jordan must play a key role in any peace settlement because of its historic links to the Palestinians and its proximity to Israel and has welcomed Amman's efforts to repair ties.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker stopped in Jordan on his latest peace mission in what King Hussein called a landmark visit. Masri agreed with comments by Hurd on Thursday that Baker was making some progress in his Middle East peace missions — cut short last week by the death of Baker's mother.

"No one can describe the time was opportune for a peace



Douglas Hurd

American efforts as coming to a halt. There are signs that Secretary Baker could be coming soon to the region," Masri said.

Hurd said on Thursday he was encouraged by Israel's acceptance of a regional peace conference — a U.S. proposal which Israel had resisted. He said, however, Syria was still arguing for an international conference to address the Palestinian issue.

Masri said there was no specific progress on forming a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation for any peace talks — one way around the problem of Israel's refusal to speak to the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

Hurd admitted that there had

agreement between Israel, the Palestinians and the front-line Arab states in the framework of the Baker plan in order to end "the poison" that continued to cause instability in the Middle East.

Referring to the continued Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab lands, Hurd told reporters at a press conference here that "the continued Israeli occupation, the lack of justice for the Palestinians, is a poison that is a cause for instability in the Middle East."

After meeting with Jordan's Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri, Hurd said that Jordan would be a key interlocutor in any peace process and that "without Jordan it won't happen."

Despite the differences of approach and view during the Iraq-Kuwait conflict, Hurd said that Britain and Jordan would now open a new chapter in their diplomatic relations.

Hurd, who was in Jordan on the second leg of a four-country tour of the region, which includes Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait said that a major effort should be made now to resolve the differences over the 24-year occupation by Israel of Arab lands in the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights.

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Talks with Kurds resume next week — Al Thawra

BAGHDAD (R) — An Iraqi newspaper said on Friday that talks between Iraqi officials and Kurdish rebel leaders would resume in Baghdad next week.

The ruling Baath Party daily Al Thawra said a Kurdish delegation, headed by the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) leader Massoud Barzani, would be in Baghdad. It did not say when the talks would resume.

Jalal Talabani, founder of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) reached preliminary agreement with President Saddam Hussein's government last week on broadening autonomy for the Kurds in northern Iraq.

Al Thawra said the rebel leaders would present a united Kurdish stand on the results of the previous talks with the Iraqi leadership.

More than one million Kurds fled towards Turkey and Iran after the Iraqi army crushed post-Gulf war uprisings in March.

On Wednesday, Talabani told British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) television that a delegation from the Iraqi Kurdistan Front, an umbrella group for the main Kurdish parties seeking autonomy in the north, would meet Iraqi officials early next week.

Last week's agreement included the re-implementation of a March 11, 1970 autonomy accord between Baghdad and the Kurds, according to Talabani.

He also told the BBC that the Iraqi leadership agreed to sweeping concessions to the Kurds and promised to abolish the ruling

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Deputy describes Saudi report as incorrect and lacking in objectivity

By a Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A prominent Muslim Brotherhood deputy has dismissed as "lacking in correctness and objectivity" a statement attributed to him by Saudi radio in which he was quoted as praising the role of Saudi Arabia in "liberating" Kuwait and lauding Saudi Arabian efforts to close Arab and Muslim ranks.

In a letter he sent to Al Rai newspaper yesterday, Tafilah Deputy Fuad Khalafat said the statement attributed to him by the official Saudi radio, and carried by the Arabic daily in its Friday edition, "is the work of agencies, since I would not make such remarks which run counter to my beliefs in closing Arab and Islamic ranks."

"At a time when the Umma (nation) is trying to heal its wounds, some sources of information are forging and fabricating news and statements such as the above to ruin whatever remains standing of the Arab wall..." the deputy wrote in the letter that appears in today's Al Rai edition.

"So if these sources do not halt issuing their destructive statements on behalf of others, and contrary to what we believe in, the war against them will be fierce, and tough," the deputy added.

"I hereby strongly condemn such misguided statements, thus making my position clear on the



Fuad Khalafat

issue," Deputy Khalafat concluded.

In line with other political groups and parties in the Kingdom, the Muslim Brotherhood, the largest and best organised among these groups, strongly supported Iraq during the Gulf crisis and the war that followed. But Mr. Khalafat's statement as quoted by Saudi radio was interpreted by some political observers as indicating a shift in the Brotherhood's position.

Asked about his opinion on Mr. Khalafat's reported remarks, another Brotherhood deputy had earlier declined direct comment, but said: "If there is a shift in the movement's policies (towards Saudi Arabia), I am not aware of it. As far as I know, our policy remains the same as it has always been."

Dumas in Tehran to 'improve relations'

TEHRAN (AP) — French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas arrived Friday for talks with Iranian officials which will include the problem of Western hostages in Lebanon.

In his statement at the airport, Dumas said the talks with his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati will include the improvement of ties between the two countries.

Tehran's relations with Paris have been strained by a \$1 billion loan Iran gave France before the 1979 Islamic revolution, which France has not yet fully repaid.

Sources close to the French delegation said the talks are to include demands for the release of 13 Westerners missing and believed held hostage in Lebanon by pro-Iranian Shiite Muslim factions.

No French are still held in Lebanon, but the apparent captives include six other men from European Community countries.

Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani is believed to be eager to end the hostage drama in order to smooth relations with the West, although Iran insists it does not control the hostage-holders.

Other sources, also speaking on condition of anonymity, said Dumas carried a message to Rafsanjani from French President Francois Mitterrand, but they would not disclose its contents.

Rafsanjani is due to visit

France at a still-undetermined date this summer. It will be his first trip to a European Community country since his election as president in July 1989.

During his three-day visit, Dumas is scheduled to meet Rafsanjani, whose efforts to mend relations with the West have been undermined by radicals.

Rafsanjani's opponents, mostly among religious leaders, fear that any opening to the West would dilute the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's fundamentalist revolution.

On the eve of Dumas' visit, the state-run Tehran Times said "there doesn't seem to be any major obstacle to the improvement of Iran's relation with Western Europe as a whole."

The daily even suggested that Europe should forge "a strong alliance" with Iran in order to counter Washington's "undeniably strong presence" in the Gulf.

German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher is also expected in Tehran Monday to promote Iran's improving ties with Bonn.

In his statement, Dumas said France was ready to increase its relief aid to Kurdish refugees who have fled into Iran.

Dumas was last in Iran in 1989, before Tehran's relations with the West were strained over Khomeini's call on Muslims to seek and kill British writer Salman Rushdie.

Bush denies involvement in 1980 hostage 'deal' with Iran

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush on Friday angrily rejected charges that the 1980 Reagan-Bush presidential campaign delayed the release of American hostages in Iran for political gain, saying "let's try to stop this rumour-mongering."

Congressional Democrats on Thursday had questioned a former Carter administration official, Gary Sick, on allegations he raised that the Reagan campaign had promised Iran arms supplies to delay the release of American embassy hostages until after the 1980 presidential election.

Challenger Ronald Reagan unseated incumbent President Jimmy Carter in the election in which Carter was blamed for failing to gain the release of 52 Americans taken hostage at the U.S. embassy in Tehran and ultimately held for 444 days.

Sick's account alleged that Bush, who was then Reagan's running mate, attended meetings in Paris in October 1980 in which the Iranians agreed not to release the hostages before the Nov. 4 election.

"Was I in Paris in 1980? Definitely, definitely, no" Bush

said during a picture-taking session at the White House with Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez.

"That's all I'm going to tell you, and let's try to stop this rumour-mongering that's going on. Repeating rumours over and over again — it's sickening," he said.

Lee Hamilton, an Indiana Democrat who is a senior member of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, said on Thursday members would

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5 Palestinians charged with bomb killings in Greece

ATHENS (R) — Greece charged five Palestinians on Friday with killing seven people in a bomb blast in the port city of Patras last month, including a Palestinian student who was carrying the explosives.

Public prosecutor George Lympourpoulos charged the men with murder through a terrorist act, forming an illegal organisation and possessing arms and explosives, police said.

They were remanded in custody and were expected to go on trial in the next two months. If

convicted, they could be sentenced to life imprisonment under an anti-terrorist law passed last December.

The blast on April 19 wrecked a five-storey building in one of the busiest streets in Patras. Public Order Minister Ioannis Vassiliadis said the bomb was intended for the British consulate, 100 metres away.

The five Palestinians, who were studying at Greek universities, were Awad Khalil, 29, Assar Al Nohani, 26, Ibrahim Al Bkairat, 27, Abou Al Naga, 23,

and Haytham Al Zeir, 20.

A Greek woman identified as Katerina Lontastidou, 27, a friend of the Palestinians, was charged with lesser offences.

The explosion destroyed the ground floor of the building and killed six employees and customers of a courier service which had offices there.

Palestinian student Ahmad Hashaykeh, 26, died when the 12-kg bomb went off in his hands by accident.

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Bangladesh cyclone death toll reaches 100,000

DHAKA (R) — The death toll in Bangladesh's worst cyclone rose to 100,000 on Friday and officials said they feared it would go higher.

The storm killed 60,000 people around the port city of Chittagong alone. Communications Minister Oli Ahmed told Dhaka's cyclone preparedness centre.

Officials earlier said more than 29,000 people died around the coastal resort of Cox's Bazar and 3,000 in Noakhali coastal district.

"The toll is going up like anything and (may) go up to anywhere," said an official, who asked not to be identified.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia appealed on Thursday for aid for 10 million people made homeless by one of the fiercest cyclones to batter the impoverished country.

"Losses caused by the worst cyclone in memorable time have surpassed all previous records. So I tell you people around the

world that we desperately need your help immediately," she said in a television broadcast.

The storm, with winds up to 145 miles per hour, pounded Bangladesh's densely populated coast and at least a dozen offshore islands in the Bay of Bengal for nine hours on Monday night, flattening buildings and sinking boats.

"I shall not be surprised if the death count surpasses 100,000," said State Minister for Relief Lutfur Rahman Khan.

Some of the islands are still under water after waves 20 feet high swept over them.

Bangladesh officials said they were facing serious difficulty in sending relief supplies to the homeless because of a shortage of helicopters.

State-run radio said on Friday that India was sending three helicopters and three more were expected from Pakistan.

Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will arrive in Dhaka on Sunday to see the devastation and express his sympathy for the cyclone victims, the radio said.

"We are passing through a very critical time, but I can assure you that aid and relief goods will be properly distributed and reach the victims," Khaleda Zia said on Thursday, apparently trying to allay fears of government misuse of aid.

Khaleda took over as Bangladesh's first woman prime minister on March 19 following general elections after former President Hossain Mohammad Ershad resigned in the face of an opposition campaign.

The cyclone, the worst natural calamity the poor country of 110 million has faced in its 20-year history, has presented her first major challenge.

"The extent of economic and property losses is about \$1.4 billion and we need about \$60 mil-

lion for immediate relief operations," Khan said on Thursday night.

However, the full extent of damage from the cyclone, fiercer than one in 1970 that killed 100,000 people, would not be known for weeks, officials have said.

Cholera was now the chief risk, Alain Deloche, president of the medical charity Medecins du Monde, told French radio in Paris.

The United States, France, China and Japan have assured Khaleda Zia of all possible aid.

A European Community spokesman said on Thursday the European Community commission had agreed to buy eight million ECUs (\$9.6 million) worth of wheat and vegetable oil from Bangladesh government stocks for immediate distribution.

Medical supplies, tents, blankets and other goods worth a further two million ECUs (\$2.4

million) would be distributed by the Red Cross and relief organisations.

Three teams from the British charity Oxfam have joined the relief operation, airlifting food and water purification tablets to Chittagong, an Oxfam spokesman said in London.

The U.S. government earlier pledged more than \$20 million worth of medical and other supplies. Saudi Arabia has sent four planes to Dhaka with relief supplies.

Others who responded to Bangladesh's plea for help included Japan with \$2.5 million, Britain with \$2.5 million and New Zealand with \$29,000.

Eight ships, including two navy tugboats, capsized near Chittagong port during the cyclone, a naval officer said.

At least five Chinese F-7 fighter jets were damaged when the cyclone and tidal waves swept an air force base at Chittagong.

Indians, Sri Lankans head home after hard time in Iraq

By Debbie Lovatt
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Sixty Indian and 11 Sri Lankan hotel workers Wednesday left Iraq for home via Jordan after being stranded in Iraq during the Gulf crisis and the ensuing war.

All 71 were working for the Oberoi Hotel chain which has three hotels in Iraq: the Babylon in Baghdad and the Niniveh and Trident in Mosul. Kanchan Kanwar, the officiating general manager for the Trident, and her deputy, Sanjay Raina, complain of infringement of human rights saying they were illegally detained by the acting general managers of the other two hotels, Denis Kapoor of the Babylon Oberoi and Rakesh Sareen of the Niniveh Oberoi.

Information from the Iraqi government saying all foreigners could leave the country was apparently not disclosed by Mr. Denis Kapoor, who falsified his position as general manager of all the Oberoi hotels in Iraq.

On Jan. 15, all those working for the Babylon in Baghdad were sent to the Trident in Mosul where it was safer. The plan at that time was to leave Iraq via Turkey, but the start of the war made travel too dangerous.

"The trouble was with the senior people," said Mr. Raina. Mrs. Kanwar claimed: "The Iraqi government directive saying all foreigners could leave was not disclosed to us. Our passports were confiscated, we had no salaries for two months so we had no money; some people had their meals stopped, and some were threatened with prison. All this was done in the name of the company which wasn't true."

One member of staff, who requested anonymity fearing he would not be allowed to continue working for the company if his identity was known, said: "Mr. Kapoor's wife wouldn't let me into the shelter when the bombing was going on. She said: 'I don't like his face, let him die.' They said I'm not allowed to talk to people. They threw me from the hotel. I ate my food like a beggar. I couldn't do anything."

Mrs. Kanwar said: "He was like many others. They were given the impression they couldn't do anything not even approach other people for protection. The police began to find out what was happening but they didn't want to meddle

in the affairs of foreigners and foreign company. Anyone who opposed anything was segregated immediately."

Stressing that "the company is very good, but these managers are not good," the member of staff said: "If Mrs. Kanwar and Mr. Raina had not been with us something dreadful might have happened to us. These people were drinking alcohol every day. My contract finished on April 6 and I requested they release me; I told them I wanted to go back (to India) and asked for my passport and a letter for my exit visa. They threatened they would take me to the police. Mr. Kapoor started cursing all my family and he made as if to hit me."

Another member of staff, who also asked not to be identified for the same reason as others, said: "They stopped me from using the cafeteria services. I couldn't eat. They did this because they said I was two hours late, but during the war we didn't have any set hours for our duty. We got into an argument and I was threatened that my belongings would be thrown out of my caravan along with myself. For two days I stayed without even a cup of tea. I was baffled by the behaviour of the top management especially because they're my own people."

Banned from eating at the cafeteria, food was hard to come by elsewhere. The member of staff said: "In the market there was nothing available and what there was, it was very expensive and I had no money. The general manager (of the Niniveh, Mr. Rakesh Sareen) said he would give me some food and I could cook for myself, but without fuel and electricity this was impossible."

The problems were compounded by the destruction of all means of communication. Of all those interviewed no one could come up with an explanation for the behaviour of the acting general managers of the Niniveh and Babylon hotels except that they resented the success of the senior staff at the Trident, who have been working for the company for only eight years, whereas the had reached their positions after about twenty years.

Mr. Raina said that "they (the acting general managers of the other two hotels) couldn't stand seeing a woman (Mrs. Kanwar) come up to their position after less than eight years. They were downright indecent because they drank too much alcohol. Short of stripping her (Mrs. Kanwar), they harassed her in any way possible."

Mrs. Kanwar said people were heading for breakdowns because of the war and the added stress of the treatment by the senior staff from the other hotels.

On March 15 the chairman of the hotel chain sent a letter, via Amman, saying the staff should leave Iraq.

"For the next 12 days this letter, which was important because it concerned people's lives, was hidden from us," said Mrs. Kanwar.

Afraid that Mrs. Kanwar and Mr. Raina would disclose to the press in Amman details of the "drunken power struggle" in Mosul, Mr. Raina said: "One of the senior staff misquoted the Indian Embassy here saying there was a directive from the embassy to cut our two phones in the hotel."

On April 29th all 71 staff left Iraq. The journey from Baghdad to Amman was without food. "After six in the evening those guys were so drunk it didn't matter to them," said Mr. Raina.

Mrs. Kanwar continued: "At the Jordanian border they said 'if you ask for food, we'll send you back to Baghdad.'"

Mr. Raina explained what the senior staff were plotting before they left Iraq: "They thought we — myself and Mrs. Kanwar — wouldn't join them on the journey to Amman so they conspired to drug us to force us to come with them."

Denis Kapoor and his wife Kiran Kapoor said: "Give them stuff to make them sleep," and the vice president of the Human Resources Division, Prakash Chandra, said: "I want them here (in Amman) by hook or by crook."

According to Mr. Raina, "it seems the vice president of the Human Resources Division was given the impression, by the acting general managers of the other hotels, that nothing was wrong, and later he didn't want to get involved except to get us back."

Looking forward to returning home after a year away, Mrs. Kanwar and Mr. Raina will also be in touch with the owner of the hotel chain, Mr. Oberoi, to whom Mr. Raina has already explained that there were "problems."

Wednesday had all the usual elements — socialising and gossip, heated debate, black tea — but broke ground by including several women who were there at the group's invitation.

"After the catastrophe of the Iraqi occupation and the important role women inside Kuwait played during that period, we think women should have a say in our society," Qaddiri, a pro-democracy opposition figure, told Reuters.

"The crisis has proved the humanitarian and creative capabilities of women," he added.

Qaddiri said the Diwaniya was the first in the history of Kuwait to include women. Kuwait women cannot vote but have more freedom than the women the more conservative Saudi Arabia.

After Kuwait's liberation

The Independent reporters declared persona non grata in Turkey

LONDON (Agencies) — The Independent newspaper reported Friday that Turkish authorities declared four journalists working for it persona non grata and arrested them.

The London Daily said Turkish police arrested its Middle East correspondent, Robert Fisk, Thursday night and held in prison at Diyarbakir in Eastern Turkey.

"The Turks appear to be unhappy about the Independent's reporting of Turkish troops' treatment of Kurdish refugees and of confrontations between British and Turkish soldiers," the newspaper said.

The paper said Turkish authorities had declared Fisk, Defence Correspondent Christopher Bellamy, Independent Staff Reporter Phil Reeves and Richard Wayman, a freelance photographer working for the paper, persona non grata and withdrawn their press credentials.

Bellamy wrote in the Independent Friday: "Fears were being expressed by experienced journalists in Diyarbakir last night (Thursday) that the Turkish authorities might be intending to prosecute him (Fisk) for insulting the Turkish army."

Earlier, another London paper, the Daily Telegraph, said Turkish authorities detained and questioned its reporter Robert Fox for 24 hours. The newspaper said Fox apparently had been mistaken for Fisk.

Bellamy said Fisk learned from

his hotel manager that the three Turkish policemen who arrested him were acting on the orders of the civil governor of the Diyarbakir region, Haile Kozakoglu.

The British Foreign Office said British embassy staff in Ankara are seeking more information about the Fisk case and are trying to contact him.

Bellamy, who returned from Turkey two weeks ago, also reported that Turkey expelled a group of British Royal Marines involved in an incident concerning another Turkish provincial governor. Bellamy attributed his report to sources in London.

The British Defence Ministry said Thursday that 30 British troops at the Yesilova Kurdish refugee camp were redeployed Wednesday night. But the ministry denied the movement was connected with Gov. Erdogan Ulker's accusation that the troops manhandled him at the camp.

Turkey said it has decided to expel Fisk for his "prejudiced" reporting about Turkish involvement in the relief operation conducted by the U.S.-led allied troops. The Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Friday.

Spokesman Murat Sungar said Fisk would be expelled Friday.

"His existence in Turkey is no longer needed because of his prejudiced, biased and ill-intentioned reporting," Sungar said.

"He is being expelled today from the country. We are carrying out the necessary proce-

dures," spokesman Ferhat Ataman told Reuters in Diyarbakir, southeast Turkey.

Journalists in Silopi, further east, said police along the Iraqi border had also detained Robert Fox of Britain's Daily Telegraph, thinking he was Fisk. The U.S. consul in the area was at last report trying to convince them they had the wrong reporter.

Strains resulting from Western efforts to aid Iraqi refugees along the Turkish border surfaced this week with the government's anger at Fisk and tension between British troops and Turkish officials.

According to Turkish accounts, Erdogan Ulker, the governor of Semdinli town, was manhandled by British marines who prevented him from inspecting the Yesilova camp.

Turkey demanded an apology and ordered the 30-man marine unit leave the country. The British Defence Ministry said on Thursday that the marine platoon had moved into northern Iraq but "they were going to go. Their deployment had nothing to do with the incident."

In London, the Independent said Fisk managed to telephone the newspaper and describe his arrest in Diyarbakir.

"Fisk called the office and told me he was in the process of being arrested by six Turkish plainclothes policemen," said the newspaper's foreign editor, Godfrey Hodgson.

Million people in Ethiopia will run out of food

LONDON (AP) — More than a million people in Ethiopia will run out of food in the next 10 to 15 days, according to a report by the British Aid Organisation Oxfam.

The group said Thursday that the Eastern African nation already is suffering severe food shortages, and that unless aid is provided quickly, the toll could exceed the great famine of 1984 which killed an estimated one million people.

"What I have seen has shaken me... The suffering is already acute," Oxfam's director, Frank Judd, told reports in Addis Ababa after touring some of the worst affected areas this week.

"The dying could overshadow that of 1984 unless action is taken immediately. The priorities are obvious: food, transport, water, medical supplies and shelter. And they are needed fast."

Oxfam, one of Britain's biggest aid groups, said 300,000 Sudanese refugees in the west of Ethiopia and at least half a million Somali refugees in the

northern part of the eastern Ogaden region have only two weeks' food left.

The group said severe food shortages also face 200,000 Ethiopians who recently returned from Somalia after years in refugee camps following the 1977-78 Ogaden war between the two neighbour states.

It said there are also 380,000 drought victims in the south of the Ogaden region, and 400,000 people are at risk from starvation in the region south

of the capital Addis Ababa.

"As the situation deteriorates in Ethiopia and other famine-hit countries in Africa, major donors are still dragging their feet over aid," Oxfam said.

The report said aid officials estimate that only half of Ethiopia's food needs for this year have been pledged and far less delivered.

Judd said he had appealed to the British government and the 12-nation European Community for help.

Schwarzkopf says he has received death threats

LOUISVILLE (R) — General Norman Schwarzkopf, head of the U.S. forces in the Gulf, said on Thursday he has received death threats since his return home from the Gulf war and has been placed under increased security. Schwarzkopf made the disclosure at a news conference prior to the annual Kentucky Derby Parade. He was grand marshal. "Yes, my life has been threatened," Schwarzkopf said in response to a question about the heavy security at the news conference. He did not elaborate but parade officials said they had been told not to disclose in advance where in the line of march the war commander would appear. An estimated 300,000 people lined the streets in downtown Louisville for the parade, an annual event held in advance of Saturday's run for the roses. The parade included 125 desert storm veterans and nine military units.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Polisario Front welcomes U.N. decision

ALGIERS (R) — The Polisario Front, which has waged a 15-year war against Morocco for control of the Western Sahara welcomed a U.N. decision to establish a force to oversee a ceasefire and hold a referendum in the territory. A Polisario statement said the Security Council vote earlier this week showed the international consensus for the national rights of the Saharan people. "The group said it was ready to work with Swiss diplomat Johannes Manz, who will head the U.N. mission for the referendum in Western Sahara (Minurso), as the force is called. The Polisario says it is confident that it will win next year's referendum in the territory, which will ask voters whether they want integration with Morocco or independence. Minurso will oversee a ceasefire in Western Sahara this year and a referendum early in 1992. Morocco has controlled most of phosphate-rich Western Sahara since Spain evacuated its former colony in 1976. But the Polisario Front has been waging a guerrilla war for the past 15 years to press its demand for independence as well as a major diplomatic offensive.

Gunmen kill two militiamen in S. Lebanon

SIDON (R) — Gunmen killed an official of a Sunni Muslim militia and his bodyguard and wounded another militiaman in the port town of Sidon, security sources said on Friday. They said the unidentified gunmen shot dead Ahmed Hamzawi of the Popular Liberation Army (PLA) and his bodyguard on Thursday near a Palestinian refugee camp on the outskirts of Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut. The sources said the assailants fled and the PLA, which controls Sidon, erected checkpoints and stepped up patrols to try to catch them. Sidon, which houses an estimated 60,000 Palestinians in two refugee camps, is still outside government control. Most Palestinians there are loyal to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat. Palestinian factions have refused a government demand to disarm, arguing they need their guns to fight Israeli troops and force them out of a strip they occupy in South Lebanon.

Medal plan proving irksome

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Australia's Greek, Cypriot, Armenian and Kurdish communities are angry over a government plan to award the country's highest honour to Turkish President Turgut Ozal. Prime Minister Bob Hawke appears to be personally blamed for the decision to give Ozal an honorary order of Australia when he visits next week. "Who's next to get a medal? (Former Chilean leader) Pinochet or (Khomeini) Roule leader? Pol Pot?" asked Armenian National Committee spokesman Kahjaghe Kortian. "We're talking here about a comparison between Mr. Ozal and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein — they both invaded small countries," said Peter Yiannopoulos, whose federation of Cypriot communities represents 90,000 Australians of Cypriot descent. Other community leaders said the award made a mockery of Australia's honours system because of what they described as Turkey's "atrocious human-rights record." Hawke had no immediate comment on the controversy. Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974, claiming it needed to protect the Turkish Cypriot minority from persecution. But Turkish troops then occupied nearly half the island and have continued to do so in defiance of United Nations resolutions. Greeks also feel strongly about the issue because of the close ties between Cyprus' Greek-speaking majority and Greece. Armenians and Kurds object because of what they see as continuing persecution of their minorities in Turkey, and for Turkey's role in the Armenian genocide of 1951. The communities are planning advertising campaigns and mass rallies during Ozal's visit and have already let Hawke know exactly how they feel in letters. Ozal is due to arrive in Australia on Wednesday, but details of his itinerary are being kept secret because of security concerns. Turkey's consul-general and his bodyguard were assassinated in Sydney in 1980 by a gunman on a motorbike. Police suspect an Armenian extremist group. The anger has been compounded by Mr. Hawke's decision to not attend ceremonies in Athens and the Greek island of Crete to mark the 50th anniversary of World War II battles in which Australians died defending Greece against a German invasion. The Greek community in Melbourne is the largest outside of Greece.

Afghan government accuses Pakistan of aiding rebels

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Afghan Foreign Minister Abdul Wakil on Thursday accused Pakistan of sending 10,000 Pakistani troops and agents to help Afghan rebels capture the city of Kandahar. He warned that the Kabul government may seek a Security Council meeting to protest the Pakistani interference. Wakil defended the heavy bombardment of Kandahar by government forces following its capture, saying "it should be so." Wakil also told a news conference that Afghan President Najib would not step down during a transitional period before elections which still have not been arranged. Rebels have demanded that Najib resign. Mansoor Sulaimi, press officer of the Pakistan mission to the United Nations, denied the Afghan charges. He said no Pakistani soldiers or personnel were involved in the attack on the city. "Pakistan had no involvement," he said. "It was strictly a Mujahideen (guerrilla) operation and it was such a tremendous success that the Kabul regime came out with routine accusations against the Pakistan government." He denied that the Pakistani government is arming Afghan rebels or allowing Pakistani territory to be used for the transfer of arms from other sources.

Dutch official to meet with Palestinians

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — A PLO spokesman Thursday expressed hopes that the strong Dutch-Israeli relationship will help achieve progress toward a Mideast peace during Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Den Broek's upcoming Mideast tour. Van Den Broek is going to Syria Sunday, and then to Israel Monday as part of a fact finding tour in advance of his accession to the revolving chairmanship of the European Community in July, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. While in Israel, Van Den Broek is scheduled to hold talks with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Foreign Minister David Levy and Minister of Defense Moshe Arens. He will also meet with Palestinian activist Faisal Husseini in occupied Jerusalem to discuss Mideast peace proposals, the spokesman said.

'We think women should have a say'

By Nadim Ladki
Reuters

KUWAIT — Kuwaiti women, capitalising on pressure for democracy and sexual equality, made history this week by gaining access to the most exclusive men's club in the emirate — the Diwaniya.

The Diwaniya, an old Kuwaiti tradition, is a regular gathering in the house of a distinguished man in almost every neighbourhood. Even the ruling Al Sabah family has them.

Male neighbours get together once or twice a week to discuss everything from politics and local problems to their favourite brand of tea. After the emir dissolved parliament in 1986, many of the gatherings became centres for opposition debate.

The Diwaniya at Mohammad Al Qaddiri's house on

Wednesday had all the usual elements — socialising and gossip, heated debate, black tea — but broke ground by including several women who were there at the group's invitation.

"After the catastrophe of the Iraqi occupation and the important role women inside Kuwait played during that period, we think women should have a say in our society," Qaddiri, a pro-democracy opposition figure, told Reuters.

"The crisis has proved the humanitarian and creative capabilities of women," he added.

Qaddiri said the Diwaniya was the first in the history of Kuwait to include women. Kuwait women cannot vote but have more freedom than the women the more conservative Saudi Arabia.

After Kuwait's liberation

from Iraqi occupation in February, said emir promised elections in 1992 for a new parliament and said he would consider giving women the vote.

"As an act of gratitude we invited the women into the Diwaniya... our main issue is freedom and implementing the constitution that treats men and women equally," Qaddiri said.

"Males or females have a right to participate in shaping the new Kuwait, the Kuwait of democracy, the Kuwait of equality and the Kuwait of justice."

Layla Othman, Kuwait's most prominent woman writer, attended the Diwaniya and said she hoped it would mark a new era.

"This step is only at its beginning and I hope it would be welcomed by the intellectuals."

It should help in building a relationship between men and women at this critical stage of reconstructing the country," she said.

Othman said Kuwaiti women demanded the right to vote.

"We reject that all matters in the country be in the hands of the ruling family. We want the people to participate. We demand that the people have a say," she said.

Othman expressed concern that things were not moving in the right direction in Kuwait. "There are no clear indications that things are moving towards some kind of democracy. Because of the chaos, we will give them time, but later we want fast steps."

While his Diwaniya marked an important first, Qaddiri said he did not expect women to gain full access to the gatherings.



Kuwaiti women celebrate the liberation of Kuwait City: can democracy be far behind?

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Documentary
19:00 News in French
19:15 French varieties
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Good Morning Miss Bilal
21:00 Encounter
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature film

PRAYER TIMES

06:17 Fajr
05:43 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:32 Dhulhr
16:12 Asr
19:22 Maghreb
20:48 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedeh, Tel. 310740
St. Nicholas of God Church, Tel. 677552
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 624446
De la Sulle Church Tel. 661757
Ternassia Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel.

623541, Anglican Church Tel. 623583, Tel. 625403, Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331, Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261, St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751, Assiout International Church Tel. 685326, Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932, Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A gradual rise in temperatures will take place and winds will be light and variable. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman Min./Max. temp. 10 / 30
Aqaba 20 / 35
Dhahran 13 / 31
Jordan Valley 20 / 34

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 25, Aqaba 30. Humidity readings: Amman 35 per cent, Aqaba 23 per

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

cont.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN: Dr. Mohammed Al Shawish 658878
Dr. Dawood Al Sanabouni 689335
Dr. George Sabouni 716751
Dr. Saoud Abu Hatat 649846
Al Salem pharmacy 636730
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nasroukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salem pharmacy 636730
Vacouh pharmacy 644945
Stomach pharmacy 637660

DRBID: Dr. Ahmad Al Hayek (—)
Al Shauri pharmacy (275825)

ZARQA: Dr. Tareq Hijawi (—)
Khalil pharmacy 955417

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 802228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 605900
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 635361
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

QUEEN ALIA HOSPITAL 60224030
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA: Zarga Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarga National Hospital (09)991071
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
DRBID: Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital (02)247100
AQABA: Princess Hayat Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
07:30 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
10:15 New Delhi (RJ)
10:30 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
11:30 Damascus (RJ)
11:45 Agaba (RJ)
17:45 Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
22:00 Paris, Damascus (AF)
22:45 Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:00 Agaba (RJ)
12:00 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:10 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
12:30 Brussels, London (RJ)
13:45 Cairo (RJ)
16:30 Tripoli (RJ)
20:00 Bahrain, Dubai (RJ)
20:15 Rome, Madrid (RJ)
12:45 Geneva, Paris (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
09:15 Beirut (ME)

22:55 Cairo (MS)
23:30 Damascus, Paris (AF)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apples 850 / 750
Banana 500 / 450
Banana (Mukassar) 450 / 400
Beans 320 / 250
Broad beans 300 / 250
Cabbage 180 / 120
Carrot 235 / 150
Cauliflower 250 / 200
Cucumbers (large) 140 / 100
Cucumbers (small) 100 / 900
Dates 300 / 250
Eggplant 330 / 250
Garlic 360 / 300
Grapefruit 320 / 280
Lemon 100 / 70
Lettuce (per one) 80 / 40
Marrow (large) 150 / 100
Marrow (small) 150 / 100
Onion (dry) 170 / 120
Onion (green) 250 / 200
Orange 240 / 200
Pepper (hot) 250 / 200
Pepper (sweet) 250 / 200
Potato 150 / 100
Sage 450 / 350
Spinach 140 / 100
Tomatoes 440 / 380

Home News

Princess Sarvath receives Jordanian drama team

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath El-Hassan received a group of Jordanian students participating in the drama production of "The Peace Child" in Perth, Scotland starting May 20, 1991.

Jordan is the only Arab country represented at this performance. It is amongst 16 countries invited to participate in this musical which aims at enhancing the concepts and prospect of peace build on friendship and understanding amongst children of the world.

The Jordanian group comprises Miss Hala Khoury, Head of Drama at the Amman Baccalaureate School and students Samer Nino, Hassan Mari, Dana Ramadan, Zeina Nasseriddin and Sarah Keilani.

Her Royal Highness wished the participants success in representing their country.

The group will depart Amman today to Britain.



JAPANESE PRESENT GIFT TO SOCIETY: Their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal Ibn Al Hussein and Princess Alia Al Faisal Wednesday receive a gift presented by head of a Japanese delegation representing the Japanese International Relations Society. The gift is destined for the Promising Hands (Al Aydi Al Waeda) Society which Princess Alia heads. Al Aydi Al Waeda Society was formed in 1989 to provide cash and in-kind donations and contributions to needy people throughout the Kingdom.

The world community has failed to take one single constructive step to implement U.N. resolutions and the international legitimacy concerning the Palestine problem and is doing nothing vis-a-vis Israel's continued rejection of these resolutions and of the idea of opening a dialogue with the Palestinian people's representatives to reach a settlement," Mr. Obeidat said in his address to the IPU's 85th meeting here.

JUST students to train at Princess Basma Hospital

AMMAN (Petra) — The Health Ministry and the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) have reached agreement on the use of facilities at the Princess Basma Hospital in Irbid to train students of the Medical Faculty, and appointed a technical committee to carry out this procedure.

The agreement, which was signed by Minister of Health Adnan Jaljoui and JUST President Kamel Ajloui, provides for the training of students at the hospital under the supervision of university professors in the fields of paediatrics, gynaecology and obstetrics, general surgery and

general practice. Under the agreement, the university will bear the cost of the training of students and of the various equipment and educational aids.

The agreement also provides for each side to allocate JD 50,000 to be placed under the disposal of the supervising committee.

It said that the supervising committee should meet every three months to review progress on this programme.

Mr. Jaljoui had earlier opened a scientific day at JUST, organised by the Pharmacy Faculty,

Addressing the audience, Mr. Jaljoui landed existing cooperation between the university and the Health Ministry saying that such cooperation is meant to upgrade the level of medical and health services offered to citizens in the various parts of the country.

The minister stressed the importance of cooperation between the Faculty of Medicine and Princess Basma Hospital.

Faculty of Medicine President Said Hijazi noted the achievements made in the area of primary health care, due to the existing cooperation between the faculty and Princess Basma Hos-

pital, Dr. Hijazi said. Dean of the Higher Studies and Scientific Research Department Hassan Malkawi reviewed the scientific research made by the university saying that the number of researches published or presented to scientific conference totalled 810.

In Irbid, the seventh cultural week of the Yarmouk University's Faculty of Arts started Tuesday, with a symposium on Arab awakening, between aspirations and challenge.

Addressing the symposium were three doctors from the departments of history, humanitarian and social sciences.

Obeidat: Selective implementation of U.N. resolutions exacerbating tensions

Arabiya says Sudan meeting was successful

PYONG YONG (Petra) — Failure on the part of the United Nations and the U.N. Security Council to implement resolutions concerning the Israeli occupation of Arab land and the displacement of the Palestinian people are bound to perpetuate the causes of tension in the Middle East region and encourage further conflicts, Jordan's representative at the Interparliamentary Union (IPU) meeting has said.

Mr. Ahmad Obeidat, a former prime minister who is deputy speaker of the Upper House of Parliament, said that United Nations had so far failed to bring about justice to the Palestinian people whose problem constitutes the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"The countries of the third

world view the so-called new world order, advocated by the United States, with a great deal of suspicion and apprehension and world parliaments are under the impression that the major powers of the world are now turning their attention to imposing hegemony on parliaments of various countries to achieve their goals," Mr. Obeidat said.

Major powers, which set up an alliance under the U.N. umbrella during the Gulf crisis, caused a shock to the world by their mishandling of the issue and their violations of the Arab human rights and the international legitimacy as these countries far exceeded the mandate of the Security Council and exploited the council's rulings," Mr. Obeidat said.

He said that the alliance harboured unjust motives and displayed total bias, giving the picture of lack of justice. "Should this trend continue, further extremism and more conflicts will emerge and nothing could ensure the dominance of international law or safeguarding respect of human rights," Mr. Obeidat said.

Mr. Obeidat expressed hope that the IPU meeting would help create a positive atmosphere world-wide, and world problems,

and issue recommendations and resolutions with solutions to problems plaguing various regions.

Meanwhile, a general Arab and Islamic people's conference held in Khartoum has voiced total support for the struggle of the Palestinian people and supported the Palestine Liberation Organization's drive to establish a Palestinian state on Arab soil.

Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat, who attended the meeting in Khartoum, told a press conference upon returning here Thursday that the conference had endorsed the concept that the liberation of Palestine was a basic principle of the Islamic action, stressing that there can be no justice or peace as long as the Palestinian people remained under occupation and repression.

The conference voiced its rejection of any formula, regional or international, which does not recognise the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, Mr. Arabiyat said.

The conference also called on Islamic countries to help implement projects that would back and help the oppressed Palestinians and help the creation of a special fund for the intifada,

according to Mr. Arabiyat. "The conference viewed with concern the existing differences among Arab and Islamic countries and called on all governments to find means of overcoming them and to work towards integration," Mr. Arabiyat pointed out.

The conference also demanded that the Arab Defence Council coordinate work with the U.N. Security Council to halt all moves to destroy Iraq's conventional weapons until Israel complies with a similar measure, Mr. Arabiyat added.

The conference, Mr. Arabiyat said, voiced support for Sudan's continued endeavour to fight off imperialist countries' pressures and hegemony, and efforts to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity and independence.

The conference also voiced support of the heroic stand of the Iraqi people in the face of aggression, and demanded that U.N. sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people be terminated, Mr. Arabiyat said.

Mr. Arabiyat was accompanied to the meeting by members of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament.

Jordan, Taiwan to seek ways of bolstering trade

AMMAN (Petra) — A Taiwanese trade delegation will arrive in Amman on May 17 on a several-day visit to meet with representatives of commercial establishments in Jordan and discuss with them ways to promote and bolster trade relations between Jordan and Taiwan. The delegation will also discuss with Jordanian officials the prospect of increasing the volume of trade exchange between the two countries. During the delegation's visit, an exhibition displaying samples of Taiwanese industrial products will be held to familiarise the Jordanian commercial sector with the Taiwanese industries.

Women hold industrial exhibition

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Amman Business and Professional Women's Club (BPWC) has organised the first trade fair specialised in exhibiting the products produced by Jordanian women entrepreneurs.

The exhibition was inaugurated by Minister of Industry and Trade Ziad Fariz at the Amman Grand Hall of Al Hussein Youth City on the occasion of Labour Day.

The exhibition was held within the context of "small business counselling for women," a project executed by the BPWC in collaboration with Queen Noor Al Hussein Foundation.

The project aims at providing Jordanian women who are interested in starting new business enterprises with information regarding relevant laws and regulations, and about financial and technical sources of support.

It provides training in various skills needed to operate a business, such as marketing, accounting, production management and planning. It introduces women entrepreneurs to the workings of various public and private organisations and provides management consultations to women for dealing with business problems faced by small and medium sized businesses.

The exhibition was held to promote and advertise a range of products currently produced by various enterprises and to encourage these women to start their own new enterprises which would enhance the national production, employment and income.

Seen at the exhibition were a variety of products including women's clothes, men's shirts, children clothes, children toys, sports clothes, food products, handicrafts, books and garden plants and flowers.

European Parliament member stresses need to solve Palestine question, Middle East issues

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Member of the Republican Party in the European Parliament Franz Shonhuber said in an interview with the Jordan Times that there would be no peace in the Middle East if the Palestine question remains unresolved.

Mr. Shonhuber said he chose to come to Jordan to discuss all the issues that should be discussed in order to reach a peaceful solution in the region. "We feel that Jordan can play a decisive role in the peace plans," Mr. Shonhuber said.

He added that there would be a session in the European Parliament in the middle of May when the Middle East question will be discussed. Although Mr. Shonhuber is a member of a small party in

the European Parliament, he feels he has a large role when it comes to the Middle East. "During the Gulf war the people of Palestine were almost completely forgotten, whereas injustice to them continued in the West Bank. My role as a member of a small party in parliament is to keep the Palestine question on the agenda of the European Parliament," Mr. Shonhuber said.

He explained that the smaller parties in the European Parliament are the ones that most support the Middle East issue. "Although the larger parties in parliament have a greater majority, and the smaller parties are the ones that support a solution to the Palestine and Middle East issues. Now the situation seems to change with parties starting to support solutions to these issues even though they previously had not," Mr. Shonhuber said.

During his stay Mr. Shonhuber met with Mr. Ahmad Inabah, the chairman of the Lower House of Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. Munzer Bilbeisi, the secretary general at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Abdul Baqi Qamoum, minister of state for parliamentary affairs.

Mr. Shonhuber plans to present his discussions in Jordan in a speech at the upcoming parliamentary session in Europe.

"I will fight for the rights of the Palestinians and for the Middle East issue in Europe, in my country and in parliament. I think that the people of Palestine feel that the world has betrayed them and they need our support today more than ever," Mr. Shonhuber said.

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Iraqi minister in Amman for trade talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — Iraq is seeking Jordan's help to ensure sufficient basic needs of food and medicine to its people, and Iraqi Minister of Trade Mohammad Mahdi Saleh was in Amman Thursday to organise shipments which had acquired U.N. approval.

A statement by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that Dr. Saleh met with Prime Minister Mudar Badran and other government officials to discuss the question of essential supplies for Iraq.

Discussion with the prime minister focused on Jordan's role in ensuring imports of food supplies and medicines needed by Iraq with approval from the United Nations.

Iraqi businessmen are already in Jordan seeking contracts to buy items ranging from tomatoes to tractors. Much of Iraq's foreign trade remains paralysed by trade sanctions and shortage of overseas funds. Food and medicine are allowed in and civilian necessities can receive U.N. approval.

Officials at the Iraqi Embassy here said Friday that Dr. Saleh and his accompanying team were expected to leave Saturday after concluding talks and various visits in Jordan.

Dr. Saleh and his delegation went to Aqaba Port Friday for inspection of the port facilities and to study with local officials ways for ensuring imports needed for the Iraqi people.

Dr. Saleh said in an interview with Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times dailies last month that Jordan would play a key role in ensuring supplies for Iraq.

He said that the port of Aqaba would be the main lifeline for Iraqi imports in the post war era, substituting the ports of Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

Petra said that the two sides had reviewed means of strengthening existing brotherly ties and what Jordan could do to help meet Iraq's needs of imports allowed within the U.N. framework.

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HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Poland

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Thursday sent a cable to Polish President Lech Walesa congratulating him in his own name and on behalf of Jordan's people and government on his country's national day. The King wished Mr. Walesa continued good health and happiness and the Polish people further progress and prosperity. Also Thursday, the King sent a cable to the Acting Bangladeshi President Shihabuddin Ahmad, expressing his deep sorrow and grief over the victims of the cyclone which hit Bangladesh over the last few days.

Prince Faisal, water officials hold talks

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ibn Al Hussein Thursday visited the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, where he met for a while with Minister Saad Hayel Al Serour, Ministry's Secretary General Mutaz Al Bilbeisi and Secretary General of Water Authority of Jordan (W.A.J.) Abdul Aziz Wishah. Prince Faisal stressed the need for making the best use of the rain water. Mr. Serour briefed the Prince on the ministry's activities and efforts to provide water to citizens as well as the ministry's projects in the field of irrigation. Mr. Bilbeisi reviewed the situation of dams in general and unveiled the ministry plans to set up dams on side valleys leading to the Jordan Valley with the aim of utilising water coming from floods.

Princess Basma meets Aqaba youth

AQABA (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAF) met with youth leaders and voluntary societies' committees in Aqaba district. The meetings focussed on working out a mechanism for reviving the role of the youth sector to play a more active role in voluntary work, and to forge closer cooperation between the youth and the Aqaba Social Services Centre. It was agreed during the meeting to form a nine-member preparatory committee to draw up an overall perception of the best ways to organise youth efforts and to define areas where youth efforts can be best utilised. Princess Basma toured a number of remote areas in the northern areas where she met with citizens and discussed their needs. Princess Basma also inspected the dairy products factory whose work is carried out by QAF in cooperation with Khashaf Al Salatin Charitable Society to improve family income.

Abu Gaura, Ghamari discuss cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — President of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society Ahmad Abu Gaura Thursday discussed with Suleiman Ghamari, chief of the Middle East and North Africa Desk of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, scopes of cooperation between the JNRCS and the League, in the area of relief. Abu Gaura also discussed with Steven Richard, president of the U.S. Red Cross, scopes of bilateral cooperation. Also Thursday Abu Gaura discussed with head of the Japanese International Friendship Society, who is currently on a visit to Jordan, the role played by this society in the humanitarian field. The Japanese visitor promised to extend assistance to the JNRCS and enable it to perform its humanitarian mission.

Bessmertnykh to visit Jordan

AMMAN (R) — Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh will visit Jordan on May 9 as part of a Middle East tour to discuss U.S.-led efforts to hold an Arab-Israeli peace conference. The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said Bessmertnykh, on his first visit to Amman since taking up the post in January, would meet His Majesty King Hussein and other senior officials during his two-day trip. From Jordan he will go on to Israel on the first such trip by a Soviet foreign minister, in a further sign of improvement between the two states. Jordan expects the Soviet Union, which has long supported the idea of convening an international peace conference on the Middle East on the basis of U.N. resolutions, to contribute substantially to any Arab-Israeli peace process. The resolutions demand that Israel exchange land for peace, an idea the Jewish state has rejected. Moscow has told Washington it would cosponsor talks between Israel, Arabs and Palestinians within the framework of a regional conference which would serve as a vehicle for direct talks between all the parties.

Training to be geared to labour market needs

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Labour Ministry will Saturday embark on a wide-scale programme of training graduates of community colleges and unskilled youth in trades badly needed by the labour market in Jordan and it announced that coordination in this matter had been reached with the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions and the Amman chambers of industry and trade.

Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Dughni was quoted as saying that the programme entailed training the Jordanian youth for periods ranging from four to six months in nursing, weaving and dressmaking, leather work and other fields required in Jordan, and noted that through this programme thousands of Jordanians were expected to be employed before the end of this year.

As of this week, the minister said, the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) has stopped implementing programmes at training centres for trades for which there is a surplus number in the market and is now turning attention to trades where there is a shortage of Jordanians and which are presently taken over by foreign workers.

The minister said that these plans were being implemented upon directives from Prime Minister Mudar Badran at his meeting with the minister of labour and ministry officials last Monday.

The meeting revealed that 160,000 foreign workers are currently in Jordan, of whom 23 per cent only work legally.

The move is being taken in a bid to find employment for 106,000 Jordanian job-seekers who can take over from the foreign workers, ministry officials noted.

The minister of labour, accompanied by Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Jamal Saraireh, Thursday visited Aqaba Port and discussed with local officials the question of employing Jordanian workers to carry out the handling of goods loaded or unloaded on board cargo vessels docked in the port.

Agreement was reached on increasing the payment of a worker in this field from JD 2.5 to JD 3 a day.

The two ministers toured the port and other installations and inspected workers' conditions in the port city.

AYF to host Libyan delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation of Libyan intellectuals will start a several day visit to Jordan on Sunday for talks with Jordanian intellectuals, thinkers, trade union leaders, according to Abdullah Kanaan, representative of the president of the Arab Youth Forum (AYF).

Mr. Kanaan said that the delegation would meet with youth from the AYF on Tuesday and would hold an extensive dialogue with them on the best methods to achieve Arab solidarity.

He called on all the forum's members to attend the meeting and "take part in the constructive dialogue."

Mr. Kanaan said that the

forum welcomed all forms of objective dialogue with local, regional and international parties, adding that the forum's strategy encourages such dialogue.

He noted that the AYF sought to enhance dialogue and to build bridges of understanding among the youth. He stressed that the meaningful dialogue was the "basic pillar that governs the work of the AYF which adopts objectivity and integrity in its entire ideas, concepts and work."

Mr. Kanaan said that the forum would open its doors to talented people and would host all the exhibitions of talented Jordanian artists with the aim of encouraging individual and collective initiatives.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

LECTURE

★ Lecture about "Max Ernst: the art of the irrational" by Mrs. Nelly Lama at the Goethe Institute — 7:00 p.m.

Plight of Shiites in south ignored as world rushes to aid Kurds

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

BAGHDAD — As international media attention as well as humanitarian aid focused on the plight of the Kurdish population in the north of Iraq, little or no attention has been accorded the Iraqi population in the south.

While international attention has resulted in vast aid packages to the north, through both international and Iraqi initiatives, people in the south are shocked and resentful at what they see as lack of compassion for their equally, if not greater, plight as a result of both allied attacks and internal strife.

Destruction, hunger and death caused by the war as well as the internal unrest afterwards have left hundreds of thousands of Iraqis in the south in a state of complete destitution.

In Karbala, Najaf and Basra, fighting between government forces and Shiite rebels have left fantastic destruction that would take years to rebuild.

In Basra, Iraq's second largest city, hardly a bridge still stands after the allied bombardments. The army and the tanks are everywhere, food is limited to Iraqi produce and the hospitals that are still operable are in dire need of medicines.

In this city of one million people the population is not out on the streets: Whether they prefer to stay home or have retreated to the marshlands northwest of the city is not known and difficult to ascertain.

The southern part of Iraq is home not only to the people known as the marsh land — Arabs but also to approximately eight million Arabs belonging to the Shiite sect of Islam.

While through their religious sect they have been historically affiliated to the Shiites in predominantly Persian Iran, the vast majority of Iraqi Shiites remained loyal to their Arab and Iraqi identity during the 8-year war against the Islamic

republic.

While proportionately under-represented in government and army for most of this century many Iraqi Shiites have found their way to the ruling circles of the government in Baghdad. The current Prime Minister, Mr. Saadoun Hamadi is a Shiite.

Many Iraqis including Shiites argue that the physical distance from Baghdad and a concentration of the Shiites in southern cities such as Basra has played a role in the lack of presence by Shiites in top government circles and especially middle government posts.

The recent aid and both governmental and international attention given to the plight of the three to four million Iraqi

Kurds in the north of the country has saddened and infuriated many Iraqi Shiites.

"Yes, I'm sure they need aid but so do we in the south, but no-one is asking us what we need," said a Shiite resident of Baghdad.

Humanitarian convoys, arranged media tours by the ministry of information and delegation tours, went to the north most outposts of Iraq but rarely got to the southern most end.

Ironically, Iraqi officials seem to feel they must care for those that the West cares for and forget those that the West forgets. But the resentment by all Iraqis towards the Kurds and the sympathy they received from the west was more than evident.

After having distributed food in the northern city of

Kirkuk, a Baghdad official of the Iraqi Red Crescent asked, "did the foreigners see that we were distributing food to the Kurds?" Implying that the Iraqis were trying to thwart accusations that they were not taking care of their Kurdish population.

The resentment, by people from southern Iraq stems from the fact that historically the Kurds have had greater representation in the Iraqi government, had greater autonomy as a group and have been given more leeway by the government in Baghdad.

The rebellion in the south seems to have been of a particularly vicious kind and conflicting reports of who did most of the damage are varied.

Many apologists for the rebels, who seem to have been supported by both members of the Islamic Iraqi opposition

based in Iran and Iranians, both of whom want to create an Islamic Republic in Iraq, claim that the rebels did not destroy civilian areas.

One shopowner in Karbala thought otherwise, however. "They hid in the homes and the mosques and in the shops, so they made the civilian areas their battleground," Abdul Karim, the shopowner, said. "After they attacked government buildings and employees and their homes they hid from the army in the civilian areas and religious shrines, so indirectly they were responsible for the destruction of these areas," he added. "If they thought the army would not rout them out they were very stupid."

Although fighting officially ended in Karbala and Najaf around the 14 of March, re-

latively fresh blood stains could be seen on the walls of mosques up until mid April. Hanging ropes indicated that hangings had taken place. Of whom? by whom? chances are only time will tell.

While Iran was an obvious supporter of the rebels, or as the Iraqis call them "the destroyers," it does not seem likely that many foreign countries or other Arab, Islamic and international, will come to their aid, any time soon. Until politics is separated from humanitarian aid and support, the three to four million Kurds who have suffered as a result of internal strife and outside encouragement to rebel, will be more important than the eight million people in southern Iraq who were bombed by the allies, armed by Iran and crushed by the Iraqi army.

PLO

(Continued from page 1)

better kept on a quiet track," said Bush.

Baker has been unable so far to arrange a regional peace conference with Israel, the Arab states and outside countries.

Bush said he had no immediate plans to send Baker back to the Middle East, "but that could change any minute."

Van den Broek wants role

Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van Den Broek begins a three-day visit to Syria and Israel on Sunday to look into a possible role for the European Community in the Middle East peace process, the foreign ministry said on Friday.

Van den Broek's trip is a prelude to the Netherlands assuming the rotating presidency of the EC in July.

"This will be a working visit in preparation for the Dutch presidency of the EC and also a follow-up to an earlier trip Minister van den Broek made to the Middle East," a foreign ministry spokeswoman said.

Van den Broek will meet Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Shara in Damascus on Sunday. He will go on Monday to Israel where he will have talks with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, his counterpart David Levy, Defence Minister Moshe Arens and President Chaim Herzog.

In Tel Aviv U.S. ambassador to Israel William Brown on Friday levelled criticism at the government for its settlement, immigrant absorption and economic policies.

"It is now becoming increasingly clear, from public statements in Israel as well as other sources, that tremendous priority has been given to providing housing in the (occupied) territories," Brown said.

He noted that mobile homes seemed to be installed overnight in the occupied lands when they take many months to be set up in Israel proper.

Brown's remarks were unusually blunt for an ambassador. Brown himself said that ambassador "make sure there is enough sugar coating on any bitter pills we hand out. But we are also expected to make sober judgments, and to try to anticipate problems."

Speaking to the commercial and industrial club in Tel Aviv, Brown also said that Israel should not depend on handouts from Washington and other countries, to help absorb new immigrants.

"There can be no assurance that tens of billions of dollars will materialise," Brown said. "If it does, and if it goes to support massive welfare programmes for the unemployed, then even tens of billions will not be enough to support a million immigrants indefinitely."

The U.S. has given Israel \$400 million in housing loan guarantees, which Brown said was the largest in American history. The money is to be used for cheap mortgages for immigrants.

Over 240,000 immigrants, mostly from the Soviet Union, have arrived in Israel since late 1989 and officials say that another 150,000 are expected by the end of 1991.

Less than 1 per cent have settled in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. About 100,000 Israelis currently live among 1.7 million Palestinians there.

On Wednesday, the Bush administration mumbled Israeli Housing Minister Ariel Sharon in Washington over his settlement policy.

Sharon, an outspoken opponent of U.S. Secretary of State James A. Baker's attempts to persuade Israel to trade land for peace, has pledged to move 50,000 more Jewish settlers into the occupied lands over the next two years.

Baker had recommended that

Housing and Urban Development Secretary Jack Kemp not meet Sharon at his office. Instead, Kemp met Sharon Wednesday at the Israeli embassy in Washington.

Asked about the Baker-Sharon split, Brown quoted the biblical passage in Hebrew: "On this matter the ambassador prefers to remain silent."

Hurd

(Continued from page 1)

been "no breakthroughs" as a result of the peace efforts of Secretary Baker plan and visits to the region but that the situation warranted further efforts to get concerned parties sitting at the same conference table.

He told reporters that Britain and the European Community supported the U.S. (Baker) plan, seeing no alternative at the present time. "We fully support James Baker's efforts... I believe he has made some progress, quite enough to warrant continued energetic American involvement and activity, because I don't think there is any substitute for energetic United States activity for solving this problem."

Hurd clearly indicated that in his view there would be no progress in the peace process if the United States were not involved in the peace process. Saying that if the U.S. were to feel the situation was "hopeless" then "there will be no settlement."

Clearly favouring a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the peace conference Hurd said: "In searching for who should speak for the Palestinians, personally I see attractions in the idea in finding some way in which there could be a joint Jordanian-Palestinian representation."

Ruling out an automatic participation by the PLO as the "sole legitimate representatives of the Palestinians" at such a conference, Hurd said "the Palestinians, have to work out with others a Palestinian representation which is representative, with whom others would also sit down."

Hurd, however, did not rule out the participation of the PLO entirely because of popular support it has from the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation. "I think myself that the PLO cannot be excluded from all these preliminary discussions although they made a big mistake in appearing to condone the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. Nevertheless they continue to attract a good deal of support in

the occupied territories. Therefore, they cannot be ignored."

When asked about the difference in approach in implementing U.N. Security Council resolutions pertaining to Arab lands occupied by Israel and the U.N. resolution pertaining to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, Hurd said that the U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 require a "negotiated reconciliation," and that thus the two situations could not be compared.

Hurd stressed that the Israeli building of settlements in the occupied territories was illegal and an obstacle to peace.

Hurd said that Britain will try to persuade Israel that the new settlements in the occupied territories are not only illegal, but are a very clear obstacle to the peace process.

Hurd said that Iraq had a problem of "huge proportions," which "we the British have been very active in helping to resolve." However, a lifting of economic sanctions to alleviate the human suffering was not yet forthcoming, Hurd said.

"It is hard to imagine a wholesale relaxation of sanctions so long as (Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein is there. He is the threat to the future of Iraq," Hurd said.

"Realistically there is no prospect of the full return of Iraq to the international community under the present regime and under the present circumstances," he added.

Bush

(Continued from page 1)

discuss the matter further in the next few days.

Although he did not rule out a possible formal congressional investigation, he and other members were at pains to make clear they were approaching the potentially explosive charges with great caution.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater equated Sick's charges to author Kitty Kelley, whose best-selling book on Reagan's wife Nancy alleges she had an affair with singer Frank Sinatra and trapped Reagan into marrying her.

"Gary Sick is the Kitty Kelley of foreign policy," Fitzwater told reporters. "It's all trash."

"The president was on the campaign every day of that period. He had a press corps with him. He never went to Paris, and if anybody wants to give me a date, I can prove it," he said.

Palestinians

(Continued from page 1)

"Hashaykeh probably failed to place the explosives at the British consulate and went to the other building with the intention of disconnecting the bomb which went off by accident," a senior police officer in Patras said.

Vassiliadis said the Palestinian group planned bomb attacks against targets in Greece but had no links with domestic guerrilla groups. Their motive for the alleged plan to attack the British consulate was not known.

Government sources said some 200 Palestinians would be expelled from Greece this month. Police have taken extra security measures at airports and ports in case of reprisals.

Greece is holding two other Palestinians accused of murder.

Mohammad Rashid, 41, goes on trial next month in Athens charged in the bombing of a Pan Am airliner over Hawaii in 1982 which killed a Japanese teenager. The government turned down a U.S. request for his extradition.

Police arrested Palestinian Abdul Rahim Khaled, 57, in March after finding a powerful bomb in his Athens apartment.

Khaled was tried in his absence in Italy and sentenced to life imprisonment for his role in the 1985 hijacking of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro during which an American Jewish passenger was killed.

Italy has asked for his extradition and a Greek court is examining the request.

Kurds

(Continued from page 1)

Revolution Command Council and hold multi-party elections within six months.

The Kurds, who form 20 per cent of Iraq's 18 million population, are seeking international guarantees for any final agreement with Baghdad.

Talabani told the BBC that the Kurdish side in the negotiations wanted guarantees "from the United States and the United Nations."

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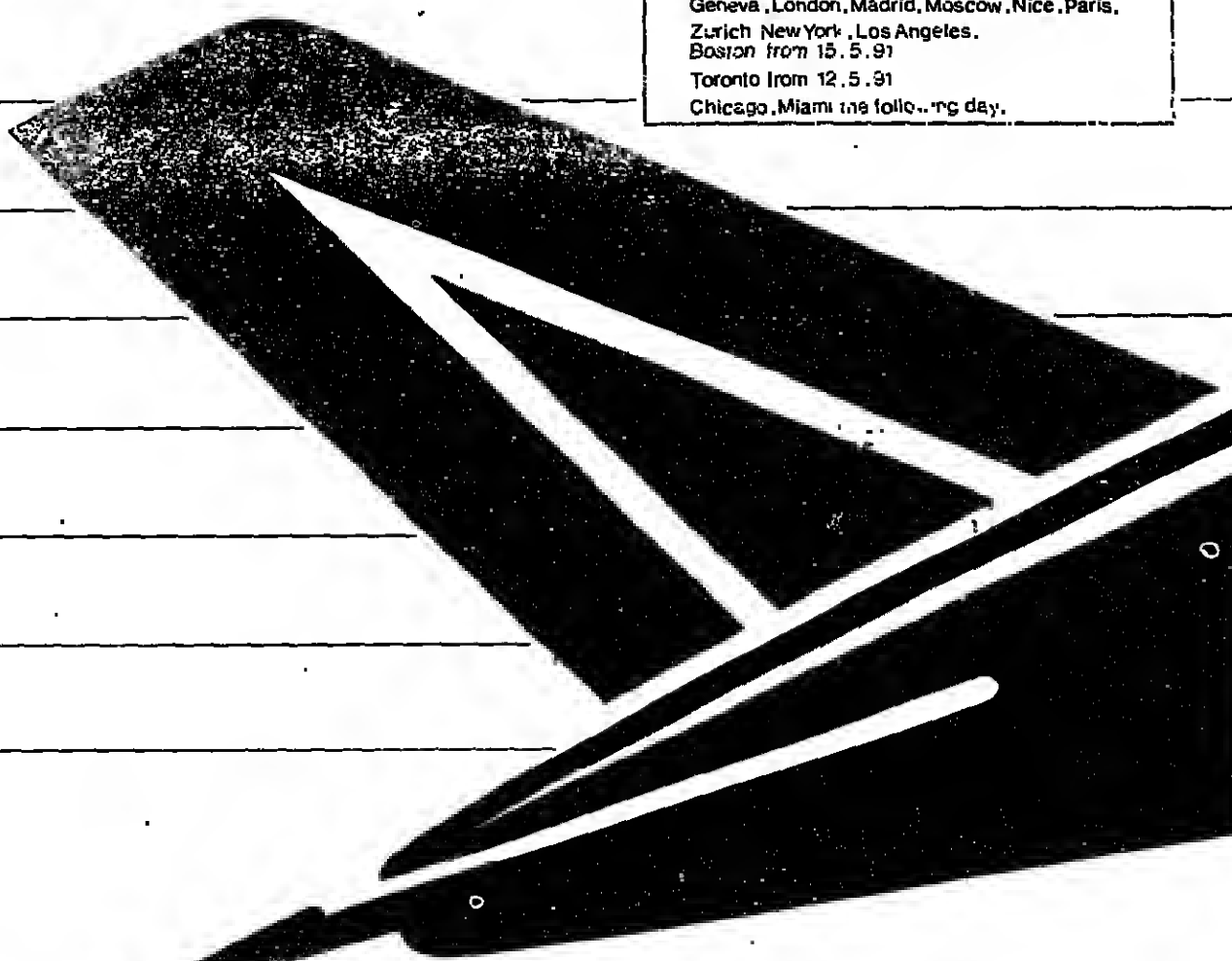
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Economy

Indian president warns of global unrest without new growth

MANILA (R) — Industrialised countries must help revive the economies of struggling Third World nations or face political turmoil that could endanger global peace and security, Indian President Ramaswamy Venkataraman has said.

Venkataraman said developing countries, particularly in Latin America and Africa, could not afford to go through another decade of stagnation or arrested growth.

"For many of them, the social and political fabric would just now be able to stand it," the 80-year-old Indian leader said in an address at the University of the Philippines.

"The resulting turmoil and tension would inevitably spill over national boundaries and could endanger the very fabric of global peace and security," Venkataraman said.

man stated. "There is, therefore, a very urgent need to introduce determined measures to reverse the present trends and get the world economy moving once more on the path of rapid growth and expansion," he added.

The former Indian finance and defence minister, who became president in 1987, said Third World countries faced a tight international credit market because of the huge financial needs of eastern Europe and the Gulf countries.

"The immediate need is to reverse the perverse phenomenon whereby developing countries have become net exporters of capital to developed countries," he said, referring to the burden of Third World debt repayments.

"In the medium term, the international system should seek to transfer to developing countries a substantial part of surplus savings of countries like Japan and Germany," he added.

He said many Asian countries had impressive economic performances. But if protectionism gained ground in industrialised states, it could hit Asian exporters hard.

The Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) forecast this month that growth in real world gross national product (GNP) would fall to 1.0 per cent in 1991 from 1.7 per cent last year and 3.1 per cent in 1989 as major economies, particularly the United States, Germany and Japan, slowed.

Venkataraman said a danger existed that preoccupation with eastern Europe following the ending of the cold war could divert attention away from the huge problems of the Third World where poverty and deprivation were still widespread.

He said there must be a "development oriented" approach towards solving the international debt problem.

"At present the only worthwhile international agenda which the developed countries are willing to talk about relates to the management of the global environment, control of illicit drugs and extension of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade)-type disciplines to new areas such as services and intellectual property rights," he commented.

Third world countries must increase their bilateral cooperation and trade, and become more self-reliant, he added.

ADB says south Asia faces barriers to growth in 1990s

MANILA (R) — The economies of India and South Asia face slow growth in the 1990s unless urgent policy reforms are introduced quickly, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has said in a report.

Political unrest across the sub-continent had slowed economic growth, while the bank said high tariffs for overprotected industries had restricted efficient development of India's exports.

"The emergence of persistent deficits in the government budget (of India) and the balance of payments... pose an increasingly serious constraint to the achievement of sustained economic growth," it said in its annual outlook report for 1991.

Gross domestic product (GDP) grew 10.4 per cent in 1988, 5.2 per cent in 1989 and 4.5 per cent in 1990, but the Indian government needed to implement measures "to reduce the rapidly rising budget deficit," the report said.

The government's total liabilities rose to 60 per cent of GDP by the end of 1989 from 44 per cent at the end of 1980.

"The mounting stock of public debt has led to a sharp rise in interest payments, which has exacerbated the problem of reducing the budget deficit. Improvement of fiscal performance is one of the most important issues that needs to be urgently addressed," by New Delhi, said the report.

India is facing its worst fiscal crisis, with a foreign debt burden of about \$70 billion and foreign exchange reserves sufficient to finance only one month's worth of imports.

It must also deal with a three-stage general election set for May 20, 23 and 26 in an effort to end 16 months of instability that has led to the fall of two minority governments.

New Delhi borrowed \$1.79 billion from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) last January and talks on an additional \$2.0 billion loan will resume after the new government approves a fresh budget.

In Pakistan, economic reform measures to trim the budget deficit, promote industry and deregulate the economy would not be felt until 1992.

Islamabad must increase spending on education, health and population planning or the "long-term development prospects of the country will remain in jeopardy," the bank said.

Sri Lanka and Bangladesh may experience modest growth over the next two years as the governments in both nations pursued "stabilisation policies and structural reforms," it said.

Sri Lanka's GDP is expected to grow 5.2 per cent in 1991 while that of Bangladesh will grow by 4.5 per cent.

Nepal's prospects remained clouded by the trade and transit impasse with India that disrupted the economy in 1989 and 1990. Until a permanent solution of the problem with New Delhi was found, the outlook for Nepal would be difficult to assess, the bank said.

The military rulers of Burma must come up with a comprehensive reform programme to bring down inflation and invest more money in infrastructure to spur investment, the bank said.

VIENNA (R) — The Kuwait Investment Office (KIO) is taking a stake of about eight per cent in Hungarian trading house Technoimpex in a private placement of shares in the company, Creditanstalt-Bankverein has said.

The KIO, which handles Kuwait's foreign investments, is paying about \$4 million for the stake, Klaus Requat, manager at Creditanstalt's C.A. Investment Banking A.G., told Reuters in answer to a query.

Technoimpex already has a joint venture with the Kuwait Petroleum Co. and a Hungarian filling station network, which paved the way for this stake.

Technoimpex officials are now discussing Hungarian involvement in the reconstruction of Kuwait, which could be worth several hundred million dollars for Hungary.

The Kuwaiti stake was part of a 300 million forint (\$4 million) capital increase taking Technoimpex's nominal share capital to 2.23 billion forints (\$29 million) and priced to raise \$6 million.

Other investors are the U.K. fund manager Henderson Administration and an Austrian industrial group, which does not yet want to be named, Requat said.

This is the second tranche of Technoimpex shares that Creditanstalt has placed. Last November Creditanstalt and British securities house Cazenove and Co., which was also involved in the present transaction, privatised the company by placing just over half of its existing capital with Hungarian and Western institutions.

Requat said Technoimpex would eventually go public.

BRUSSELS (R) — Spain has asked its European Community (EC) partners to create a special fund to narrow the gap between rich and poor EC members as they tighten their economic and political bonds.

The request seems certain to cause a clash with wealthier states and could hold up the bloc's negotiations on political and monetary union, diplomats said.

The EC has traditionally handed out aid for specific projects in poorer regions and is doubling such funds over five years, with a target of 14 billion European Currency Units (ECUs) (\$1.7 billion) in 1993.

But it has no provisions for broad redistribution of income which Madrid is seeking. Spain argues that the EC treaty changes under negotiation since December must include the creation of a fund like that under which German states share out their wealth.

"The request may be difficult to accept but it should not prove unacceptable," a senior Spanish diplomat said.

A diplomat from Germany, the EC's wealthiest member and, therefore, main contributor to any such fund, forecast a fight.

"We can't accept it and neither can others, probably," he said. "This kind of fund is likely to work only when economic differences are small."

Spain found little support among other states when it first aired its views last month at the EC's treaty talks.

It shifted into high gear by translating them into draft treaty articles, approved by its cabinet of ministers last week and circulated to the other 11 member states Tuesday.

All chances to the Community treaty have to be agreed unanimously by the 12 governments.

Egypt raises energy prices

CAIRO (R) — The Egyptian government imposed steep price rises for petrol, cooking fuel and other energy products Friday in a further effort to cut a huge budget deficit and win fresh credits and debt relief from the West.

Oil Minister Abdul Hadi Kandeel said the increases, ranging from 33 to 100 per cent, took effect at midnight, the national news agency MENA said.

The latest in a series of austerity measures, the rises were aimed at meeting a key demand of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for an accord expected to be finalised later this month.

Cash-strapped Egypt has a foreign debt of about \$35 billion and a budget deficit estimated at up to \$4.5 billion for the fiscal year ending June 30.

In three years of hard bargaining with the IMF, Egypt argued against any hasty reforms that might lead to social unrest.

Sudden rises in the prices of bread and other necessities in 1977 were met with street riots in which dozens were killed. The



Abdul Hadi Kandeel

ing with the IMF, Egypt argued against any hasty reforms that might lead to social unrest.

Sudden rises in the prices of bread and other necessities in 1977 were met with street riots in which dozens were killed. The

government was forced to rescind the increases.

The Paris Club of creditor nations is expected to write off as much as 50 per cent of Cairo's debt once an IMF agreement is concluded.

Under the austerity programme, President Hosni Mubarak signed into law Thursday a 10 per cent sales tax which economists say will fall hardest on middle-class Egyptians.

The government has said the tax would not affect prices of basic foodstuffs, to protect low-income families.

Mubarak said in a May Day address Wednesday that the austerity moves were needed to provide a better life for coming generations. "Economic reforms, has burdens we all must bear. We must bear it now for our children in the future," he said.

Prime Minister Atef Sedki said

Thursday the rises would reflect the real cost of commodities which had long been subsidised, by the government.

Under the new list of prices announced by Kandeel, the cost of a litre of low-grade petrol was raised from 55 piasters to 70 piasters (16 cents to 21 cents) and the higher grade from 60 to 80 piasters (18 to 24 cents).

Prices of kerosene, used by most of Egypt's 56 million people as cooking fuel, and gas oil were doubled to 20 piasters (six cents) per litre. The price of butane gas went up by 66 per cent. Home-delivered gas cylinders would now cost 2.5 pounds (75 cents) each, up from 1.5 pounds (45 cents).

Fuel oil rose to 80 pounds (\$24) from 70 pounds (\$21) per tonne.

Egypt had already raised energy prices by between 40 and 130 per cent last year.

Kuwait takes stake in Hungarian trading house

VIENNA (R) — The Kuwait Investment Office (KIO) is taking a stake of about eight per cent in Hungarian trading house Technoimpex in a private placement of shares in the company, Creditanstalt-Bankverein has said.

The KIO, which handles Kuwait's foreign investments, is paying about \$4 million for the stake, Klaus Requat, manager at Creditanstalt's C.A. Investment Banking A.G., told Reuters in answer to a query.

Technoimpex already has a joint venture with the Kuwait Petroleum Co. and a Hungarian filling station network, which paved the way for this stake.

Technoimpex officials are now discussing Hungarian involvement in the reconstruction of Kuwait, which could be worth several hundred million dollars for Hungary.

The Kuwaiti stake was part of a 300 million forint (\$4 million) capital increase taking Technoimpex's nominal share capital to 2.23 billion forints (\$29 million) and priced to raise \$6 million.

Other investors are the U.K. fund manager Henderson Administration and an Austrian industrial group, which does not yet want to be named, Requat said.

This is the second tranche of Technoimpex shares that Creditanstalt has placed. Last November Creditanstalt and British securities house Cazenove and Co., which was also involved in the present transaction, privatised the company by placing just over half of its existing capital with Hungarian and Western institutions.

Requat said Technoimpex would eventually go public.

BRUSSELS (R) — Spain has asked its European Community (EC) partners to create a special fund to narrow the gap between rich and poor EC members as they tighten their economic and political bonds.

The request seems certain to cause a clash with wealthier states and could hold up the bloc's negotiations on political and monetary union, diplomats said.

The EC has traditionally handed out aid for specific projects in poorer regions and is doubling such funds over five years, with a target of 14 billion European Currency Units (ECUs) (\$1.7 billion) in 1993.

But it has no provisions for broad redistribution of income which Madrid is seeking. Spain argues that the EC treaty changes under negotiation since December must include the creation of a fund like that under which German states share out their wealth.

"The request may be difficult to accept but it should not prove unacceptable," a senior Spanish diplomat said.

A diplomat from Germany, the EC's wealthiest member and, therefore, main contributor to any such fund, forecast a fight.

"We can't accept it and neither can others, probably," he said. "This kind of fund is likely to work only when economic differences are small."

Spain found little support among other states when it first aired its views last month at the EC's treaty talks.

It shifted into high gear by translating them into draft treaty articles, approved by its cabinet of ministers last week and circulated to the other 11 member states Tuesday.

All chances to the Community treaty have to be agreed unanimously by the 12 governments.

Saudi central bank tries to build up rial liquidity

DUBAI (R) — Saudi monetary authorities appear to have taken another important step in a strategy to keep money inside the kingdom and build up domestic cash resources because of large Gulf war costs, bankers said.

The Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA) has started setting yields on the short-term money market instruments it offers to banks each week within a hair's breadth of rates banks pay each other for money in the interbank market, they said.

The effect is to make SAMA's 2.7 billion riyals (\$733 million) per week of bankers security deposit accounts (BSDAS) much more attractive to Saudi banks, which are currently floating on a sea of money liquidity, they said.

"There could be several reasons but I think the main reason is to help cover Gulf war costs," said a Saudi bank dealer.

Banker said recent SAMA actions should make it easier for domestic borrowers to find funds, and also bolster SAMA's own ability to manage liquidity as the lender of last resort.

Independent economists reckon Saudi Arabia may have to cover anything from \$40 billion to \$60 billion costs for the U.S.-led war, that drove Iraq from Kuwait in February.

This does not include private and public sector demands on the money markets for normal investment and development.

Bankers say Saudi public sector firms are already looking for large loans for postwar projects because government funding over the next few years will be tight.

The leap in Saudi oil production during the crisis to around eight million barrels per day generated huge extra cash flows for Saudi banks.

At the same time, the banks were consciously building up as many liquid assets as they could to protect against the worst possible outcome of the war.

SAMA is concerned, therefore, to keep more rial liquidity inside the country rather than seeing banks lending most of it out, as they usually do, in dollars to overseas banks.

"We are long in everything. We usually buy dollars and go and lend them on to Japanese banks but if there is a domestic alternative that is fine," said another senior dealer.

SAMA issues one, three, and six-month BSDAS each week. Historically, yields have been set around 1/8 of a point below the like-dated interbank rate for borrowers.

This has now gone down to 1/16, or less. "They are very close to the base of the market," said a dealer.

On Monday, the three-month BSDAS were priced to yield 6.0563 against a market bid of 6.0650 on the three months interbank market. On historical expectations, the BSDA yield might have been much lower around 5.9500, dealers said.

There is talk in the rial market SAMA is also considering improving its own access to liquid resources by introducing a money market instrument called a reverse repurchase agreement.

Last week, it liberalised the banks' access to SAMA funds through repurchase agreement with the central bank.

SAMA received high praise from Saudi banks for its management during the Gulf crisis in keeping confidence in the Saudi financial system, and it is building a reputation as the more sophisticated of the Gulf Arab central banks.

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AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES			
Thursday, May 2, 1991			
Central Bank official rates			
	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	678.0	682.0	
Pound Sterling	1168.4	1275.4	
Deutsche mark	396.6	399.0	
Swiss franc	468.5	471.2	
French franc	117.2	117.9	
Japanese yen (for 100)	491.7	494.7	
Dutch guilder	351.8	353.9	
Swedish crown	110.7	111.4	
Italian lira (for 100)	53.6	53.9	
Belgian franc (for 10)	193.3	194.5	

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES			
Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.			
One Sterling	1.7225/35	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1505/10	Canadian dollar	
	1.7130/35	Dutch guilder	
	1.9300/10	Deutsche mark	
	1.4470/80	Swiss franc	
	35.24/28	Belgian franc	
	5.8050/8100	French franc	
	1271/1272	Italian lire	
	137.80/90	Japanese yen	
	6.1330/80	Swedish crown	
	6.6800/50	Norwegian crown	
	6.5500/50	Danish crown	
One ounce of gold	356.25/75	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS	
TOKYO — The Tokyo market was closed until Tuesday for national holidays. The Nikkei index fell 11.14 points on Thursday to 26,477.86.	
SYDNEY — Australian stocks closed slightly lower after a day of slow trading. The All Ordinaries index ended at 1,517.8, down 2.1 points.	
HONG KONG — Hopes for a local interest rate cut pushed the Hang Seng index up 11.74 points to 3,737.88.	
SINGAPORE — Most players stayed sidelined with the Tokyo exchange closed. The Straits Times index closed at 1,545.95, down 11.28.	
FRANKFURT — German post-bourse shares eased one or two marks from closing levels after April U.S. data showed an unexpected fall in the jobless rate, hurting U.S. bonds. The DAX index earlier closed 1.80 points higher at 1,631.84.	
ZURICH — Lack of direction kept traders on the sidelines. The SPI index slipped 3.6 points to 1,082.4.	
PARIS — An afternoon surge, attributed by brokers to U.S. buying, sent the CAC-40 index 8.08 points higher to 1,832.31, its highest close for a month.	
LONDON — Stocks struggled most of the day to recoup opening losses caused by an election setback for the ruling Conservative Party. The FTSE index lost eight points to 2,522.7. The market will be closed Monday.	
NEW YORK — Weakness in bond prices kept shares under pressure. At 1556 GMT the Dow Jones industrials were down 9.15 to 2,929.46.	

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★**PRETTY WOMAN**

Show: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema **NIJOUN** Tel: 675571

Mahmoud Abdul Aziz in **ABU KARTONEH**

Arabic

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30, p.m.

Cinema **PHILADELPHIA** Tel: 634144

STEALING HOME

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema **PLAZA** Tel: 699238

Ahmad Zaki / Halah Sudqi in **THE ESCAPE**

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Major's Conservatives suffer heavy losses in local elections

LONDON (R) — British Prime Minister John Major's ruling Conservatives have suffered sharp losses in elections for new local councils, dimming prospects of an early parliamentary ballot in June.

The poll was the biggest test of Major's government since he took over from Margaret Thatcher in a divisive leadership battle last November.

Conservative Party Chairman Chris Patten acknowledged Friday the results of the local polls held Thursday were "disappointing." He said Major had taken the result extremely well.

By 0830 GMT, most results had been declared in voting for the 369 local councils in England, excluding London, and Wales. The Conservatives suffered net losses of 785 seats.

The opposition Labour Party's share of the vote stood at 38 per cent and the Conservatives' at 36

per cent. Bookmakers Ladbroke made the Labour Party favourite to win the next general election, which Major must call by mid-1992, at odds of 4-5 with the Conservatives priced at evens.

Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock hailed his party's significant gains in the elections as a "great advance" and called for a swift general election.

But political commentators said the heavy Conservative losses made it more likely Major would delay calling a general election for some months.

The Conservatives are hoping the economy — hit by a record rise in unemployment that now stands at more than two million — will recover from a slump before Major has to seek a new parliamentary mandate.

The markets' reaction to the local election results were muted. The FTSE Index of the leading

100 shares in London opened on Friday down 6.8 at 2523.9 and at 0850 GMT was showing a fall of only 2.5 at 2525.2.

A slump in Conservative support was not all bad news as far as the currency market was concerned.

Some traders had been worried that Major would be tempted to cut interest rates prematurely for political motives but those concerns subsided as prospects of a June election appeared to fade.

The result effectively means the Conservatives can't go for an early general election so they aren't going to feel the need to back away at interest rates at every available opportunity.

At 0800 GMT sterling was trading at 2.9546/72 marks compared with Thursday's late 2.9580/9625 but was up slightly against the weaker dollar at



John Major

1.7205/15 versus a previous 1.7130/40.

Professor Anthony King said the results paved the way for the first open general election since 1979 when Thatcher won the first of her three consecutive victories.

The centrist Liberal Democrats did better than they expected in councils across Britain, wrenching control of several local authorities from the Conservatives.

16 die in Yugoslavia as fears of civil war grow

BELGRADE (R) — At least 16 people have been killed in the bloodiest clashes between Serbs and Croats in Yugoslavia since World War II, increasing fears of civil war, Croatian officials said Friday.

The local council in the northern Croatian town of Vukovar said 12 Croatian policemen and three civilians were killed in several hours of shooting with Serbs Thursday in the nearby village of Borovo Selo.

Local hospitals said 14 police and six civilians had been hurt in fighting before federal army tanks and soldiers intervened. Another policeman was killed in a gunfight in Palaca village in southern Croatia.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman said war had begun after months of tension between Serbs and Croats. Yugoslavia's biggest nationalities and old rivals with a bloody history.

He accused Serbs of plotting the clashes and said he would have to reconsider relations with the rival republic. He appealed for calm but said he would mobilise civilians in trouble spots and use all means necessary to defend Croatia.

"We have experienced the most tragic day in the short history of the new democratic authorities, a year after the victory of young democracy in Croatia," Tudjman said in a broadcast statement, referring to free elections last year.

"We are facing, I may say, the beginning of open warfare against the Republic of Croatia," Relations between Serbia and Croatia have deteriorated since the six republics in Yugoslavia, a country of 23.5 million people, held free elections last year that aggravated ethnic rivalries. Clashes have become more frequent this year.

Armenian group says 60 killed in Karabakh clashes

LONDON (Agencies) — An Armenian exile group said more than 60 Armenians were killed and 75 taken hostage in clashes this week with Soviet troops and forces from the neighbouring Republic of Azerbaijan.

"The Armenian population... was the victim of violent searches, beatings and killings, resulting in over 60 dead and scores of injured," the Armenian National Committee said in a statement issued Thursday.

Many of those killed and injured were women and children, it said.

Armenia's nationalist president said earlier Thursday that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev had promised him he would try to stop armed clashes which have brought fears of war between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

President Levon Ter-Petrosyan said he spoke to Gorbachev for 10 minutes Wednesday, shortly after attacks on two Armenian-population villages inside Azerbaijan Tuesday.

Meanwhile an Armenian lawmaker said Thursday Armenians injured in attacks by Soviet and Azerbaijani troops are dying because doctors have not been allowed to treat them.

David Vardanyan, chairman of the Armenian Supreme Soviet's Foreign Relations Commission, said six people seriously hurt in the fighting died Wednesday before doctors could reach them.

Vardanyan told reporters that helicopter troops arrived near the villages Wednesday night carrying doctors to treat the injured, but Azerbaijani troops stopped them and Soviet anti-aircraft forces

have forbidden other helicopters from arriving.

Armenians contend that Azerbaijani troops, aided by Soviet forces, attacked the villages of Getasben and Martunasben, which are inside Azerbaijan but are populated mainly by Armenians.

Azerbaijanis, however, say their troops took over the villages — with a combined population of 2,760 — because they were being "used as" bases for anti-Azerbaijani terrorism.

"Today everyone knows that the aggressor is Armenia itself," Azerbaijani legislator Bekir Eyubov was quoted as saying by the republic's news agency (ASSA).

The conflicting reports could not be independently reconciled. Vardanyan said Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan discussed the violence Wednesday night by telephone with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. Gorbachev said he would study Ter-Petrosyan's proposals "for stabilising the situation."

Those suggestions include ending all military actions by Soviet Interior Ministry forces in the region, allowing helicopter flights, and preventing deportations of Armenian villagers.

"The president promised to take these conditions under advisement. But what will come of it is difficult to say," Vardanyan said.

He added that Ter-Petrosyan and Soviet KGB Chief Vladimir Kryuchkov have said Azerbaijan was demanding that the villagers leave before it will allow doctors to treat the wounded.

New quake hits Soviet Georgia

MOSCOW (R) — A new earthquake shook a remote mountainous region of the southern Soviet Republic of Georgia Friday, four days after a quake killed at least 180 people in the area.

There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage. The Soviet News Agency (TASS) said the quake 7.0 on the Richter Scale and of the same magnitude as its predecessor, hit

the village of Tseidi at about 11 a.m. (0800 GMT).

"The scope of the damage is being investigated," TASS said. No other details were immediately available.

On April 29, an earthquake tore through four mountainous Georgian regions, demolishing buildings, cutting road links and burying one village in tonnes of rock. Local officials said at least 180 people were killed.

Strong earthquake hits Tokyo area

TOKYO (AP) — A strong earthquake with a preliminary reading of 6.5 on the Richter Scale hit an area south of Tokyo Friday, but there were no reports of casualties, the Central Meteorological Agency said.

The 11:15 a.m. (0215 GMT) tremor occurred near the

Torishima Island, some 580 kilometres south of Tokyo, the agency said. It said there was no danger of tsunami seismic waves because the epicentre was deep.

There were no immediate reports of damage. The agency said the quake's epicentre was located 460

kilometres below the sea floor some 250 kilometres south of Torishima.

The earthquake registered three on the Japanese scale of seven on Chichijima Island, some 250 kilometres southeast of the epicentre, and two in Tokyo and Yokohama.

8 killed in U.S. chemical plant blast

STERLINGTON, Louisiana (AP) — The death toll has reached eight in a thunderous explosion at a chemical plant that is this little town's economic life blood.

Wednesday's explosion also injured more than 120 people. The death toll rose as emergency workers picked through the wreckage of the JMC Fertiliser Plant discovered the bodies of four people who had been missing.

All eight people killed — seven men and one woman — were workers at the plant, including its manager, said plant operations manager Bill Patterson. He said no one else was missing.

Firefighters extinguished small fires that were still burning

Thursday. State environmental officials checked air quality. Roughly 500 to 600 of the town's estimated 1,200 residents were evacuated immediately after the blasts. Although the state police evacuation order remained in effect Thursday, a few merchants were allowed back to assess damage.

They found buildings with windows blasted out and ceilings caved in, siding ripped from houses, dozens of burned-out vehicles and chunks of twisted metal littering the streets. At the plant, the explosion site was a mass of twisted metal tanks and pipes.

One merchant, Ray Lowery, said town retailers relied heavily on commerce from the plant. He

said Sterlington sits in what once was a natural gas field. But the gas played out seven or eight years ago and IMC is now the heart of the town's economy.

About 450 people worked in the plant. The blast damaged a complex of equipment used to manufacture nitroparaffin, a base chemical for paints, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals. Propane and nitric acid are used in the process.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration was investigating the accident.

Of the 123 injured, 22 remained hospitalised with injuries that were not believed to be life-threatening, said Sgt. Hamilton Mixon, a state police spokesman in Baton Rouge.

Discovery astronauts snatch SDI research satellite

SPACE CENTRE, Houston (AP) — The Discovery astronauts snatched an orbiting "Star Wars" research satellite and packed it back in the shuttle's cargo bay after it studied exhaust plumes and rocket fuel sprayed into space.

The 4,200-pound (1,900-kilogramme) satellite spent 38 hours in space collecting data on a series of tests designed to help scientists build a defence system that could track and destroy incoming enemy missiles.

Discovery closed in on the \$94-million satellite Thursday after the elaborate experiments were completed, and the crew snared it with the shuttle's robot arm.

Another propellant test was scheduled Friday the satellite perched atop the 50-foot (15-metre) mechanical arm, which would be extended into space again. The craft also was to observe the Earth and the shuttle.

Scientists were pleased with Thursday's results.

"They were hoping for a great database, but they're getting more data than they ever expected," said Maj. Carolyn Channave, a spokeswoman for the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), better known as Star Wars. "They're very impressed."

In two rocket propellant observations completed Thursday, the shuttle, satellite and fuel canisters whirled around the world in formation. While the canister spewed fuel, the satellite captured the events with infrared sensors and television cameras.

Earlier, the satellite watched the orbiter's exhaust plumes as the astronauts guided Discovery through a series of fancy flip-flops never performed before by a shuttle.

Two cartwheels were executed Thursday when the two craft were just 1½ miles apart, while tests were conducted Wednesday at a distance of 10 kilometres. The first flip was delayed nine hours because the satellite got stuck in the wrong position.

Pentagon scientists need infrared readings of exhaust plumes and gases and chemicals in space to develop sensors that could track and detect missiles. The types of gases used in the tests are potential camouflage for warheads and are believed to have been deployed by other countries, said Michael Harrison, director of the spacecraft project.

In the first propellant test, 15 pounds (8 kilogrammes) of rocket fuel spurted out of a canister and formed a bright vapour cloud.

The shuttle swung out of a plane so the event could be recorded by the satellite, which was 111 miles (178 kilometres) from the canister. Discovery was two miles (three kilometres) behind the satellite at the time.

The astronauts later observed 52 pounds (23 kilogrammes) of another type of rocket propellant shot from a second orbiting canister.

Besides the third propellant test, the astronauts planned to work on several other secondary experiments during the test of the eight-day military mission.

Two failed data-recorders have caused several tests to be scrapped. Engineers were working on a way to relay the instruments' data directly to the ground to salvage some of the experiments.

Death toll in S. Africa fighting hits 96

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Convoys of heavily-armed police Friday struggled to keep apart rival black groups armed with spears, knives and axes. Authorities said at least 96 people had been killed in six days of fighting in black townships.

Supporters of the African National Congress and its rival Inkatha Party taunted each other to fight in parts of Soweto. Police with armoured cars, machine guns and rifles stood guard between them.

Police Col. Tienie Halgryn said nine people were killed overnight in the township, including five stabbed to death and two killed by "necklacing," in which burn-

ing car tires were put around their necks.

Police patrols came under fire several times early Friday, officers said. Several shacks belonging to Zulus, members of the tribe that dominates the Inkatha, were set on fire in Soweto.

Violence continued in other townships near Johannesburg. Police said two blacks were shot to death in Alexandra. Police and army units were sent to various townships to try to stop the fighting.

At least 96 people have died in black faction fighting in townships around Johannesburg since last weekend, police said. Hundreds of people, mostly women and children, fled their

homes Friday in other areas hit by violence.

The ANC said two men killed late Thursday in their Soweto home, Douglas Nkosiyan, 54, and Templeton Nkosiyan, 74, were related to group leader Nelson Mandela.

"Both are nephews of Mr. Nelson Mandela. Reports indicate that this is the reason why the men were murdered," said a statement released Friday.

"ANC supporters were butchered without police interference," the group charged in the statement. It repeated accusations the government has not tried to stop Inkatha attacks on ANC supporters. The government has rejected such charges.

U.S., Philippines fail to agree on bases treaty

MANILA (R) — Protracted negotiations on the future of major U.S. bases in the Philippines virtually collapsed Friday after the United States refused to meet Manila's demand for \$825 million in annual compensation.

Chief U.S. negotiator Richard Armitage was scheduled to leave for Washington and no new date was set for resuming the talks over Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base, the largest U.S. military facilities in Asia.

U.S. spokesman Stanley Schragger said he was disappointed there was no agreement in the talks which have dragged on for almost a year.

At a news conference, Schragger said it was right for the Philippines to try to get as much as it could in compensation to meet its development needs but "the U.S. ability to meet these needs has its limits."

"The limit with respect to bases-related compensation has been reached... the question is whether or not the Philippines wants a new relationship," Schragger said.

Asked by a reporter if this meant the talks were "finito or kaput," Schragger replied: "In a manner of words."

Spokesman for the two sides had said they expected to conclude a new treaty in this week's talks, but neither team found room to compromise.

The Philippines had offered a seven-year deal at \$825 million

annually, including \$400 million in cash and a "soft component" of \$425 million in the form of trade concessions and debt relief.

The United States is holding out for a 10-to-12 year deal at \$360 million a year.

The current U.S. lease on Clark and Subic expires in September. The Philippines has said U.S. troops must leave if no new agreement is reached by then.

Schragger said the bases were a declining asset because U.S. forces were being gradually withdrawn.

Therefore to link trade quotas and other non-bases concessions to the negotiations could backfire on the Philippines, he said.

Philippine spokesman Raul Rabe told reporters the issues of compensation and duration of a new treaty remained unresolved after six rounds of talks.

"We intend to continue talking," he said.

But no date was set for a seventh round of talks.

Rabe said Philippine President Corason Aquino had reaffirmed the Philippine position of demanding \$825 million a year.

He said Manila was not disappointed that Armitage was returning for consultations with U.S. President George Bush.

"The Philippine panel views this development as a continuation of efforts to arrive at a mutually acceptable agreement," he said.

Japan regrets military past in Singapore

SINGAPORE (AP) — Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu expressed contrition Friday for Japan's wartime aggression in Asia, but he stopped short of apologising.

Suff, it was one of the most forthright statements of regret over Japan's World War II role by a Japanese leader since South Korean President Roh Tae-woo's visit to Tokyo last May, when Kaifu apologised for Japan's occupation of Korea.

"This year marks the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the Pacific War," Kaifu said in a speech before an audience of about 300 businessmen and academics.

"Looking back upon the first half of this century, I express our sincere contrition at Japanese past actions which inflicted unbearable suffering and sorrow upon a great many people of the Asia-Pacific region."

"The Japanese people are firmly resolved never again to repeat those actions, which had tragic consequences," he said.

The island of Singapore fell to Japanese forces on Feb. 15, 1942 when British forces surrendered. Many British and Australian soldiers were taken prisoner.

3rd S. Korean student sets himself on fire in protests

SEOUL (R) — A South Korean student set himself on fire and leapt in flame, shrieking anti-government slogans, from a building Friday in the third such grisly protest this week against the fatal beating of a protester by riot police.

Chon Se-Yong, 20, set himself alight ignoring pleas for calm and conciliatory gestures from the embattled government of President Roh Tae-woo, which faces mounting protests.

"Overthrow the Roh Tae-woo regime," Chon screamed as he plunged from a first floor window while 200 students at an anti-government rally watched in horror.

Chon was rushed to hospital where he was in grave condition with burns over 90 per cent of his body, hospital sources said.

He was the third student to set himself on fire in a week. One student died of his burns Thursday night. The third, a 19-year-old woman who set herself on fire in Kwangju Monday, was reported in critical condition.

The protests were triggered by the death of 20-year-old freshman

Kang Kyung-Dae at a protest in Seoul last Friday. Five riot police have been arrested and charged with homicide in the beating, which has shocked and sickened the country.

The mounting anger over Kang's death — he was cornered and beaten with iron bars while trying to run away — has sparked one of the most serious challenges to Roh since he took office in February, 1988.

Student protesters have been joined by veteran dissidents, church groups, labour activists and the political opposition in demanding Roh's cabinet resign to take responsibility for the student's death.

Earlier Friday, the government put its much-criticised riot police on a tight leash and appealed for calm.

Riot police deployed throughout Seoul and other major cities ready to quell further outbreaks of the street violence that has ripped through South Korea since Kang's death.

Scattered protests were reported in Seoul and Pusan.

COLUMN

Pavarotti celebrates career's 30th anniversary

REGGIO EMILIA, Italy (R) — Opera superstar Luciano Pavarotti celebrated the 30th anniversary of his career, singing in the northern Italian city where he made his professional debut. The heavyweight tenor sang arias from operas including Italian composers Giacomo Puccini's Tosca and Giuseppe Verdi's La Forza Del Destino in the Municipal Theatre of Reggio Emilia, in the Po Valley. It was in this theatre that Pavarotti, a baker's son who once dreamed of soccer stardom, launched his career on April 29, 1961 with a part in Puccini's La Bobeme. Asked whether he would do anything differently if he could have a second life, the 55-year-old Pavarotti told the Corriere Della Sera newspaper: "Nothing, because at this stage of my life and my career, I feel young, free, with a great desire to learn, to do new things." "Anything in particular?" "Yes, I'd like to do what I'm doing even better."

Writer sued over 'Nancy' book

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Frank Sinatra's former lawyer sued author Kitty Kelley, claiming the pop biographer defamed him in her best-selling book Nancy Reagan: An Unauthorized Biography. Beverly Hills attorney Milton Rudin seeks unspecified damages from Ms. Kelley and publisher Simon and Schuster.

The case was filed in U.S. district court because Rudin alleged violation of a federal law that deals with misrepresentation of facts in interstate commerce. Rudin's secretary said company policy prevented Rudin or anyone at the firm, which was handling the case, from discussing the suit. Ms. Kelley's book lists Rudin as one of hundreds of her sources in the unflattering portrait of the former first lady. Rudin alleges that the author harmed his reputation by implying he had discussed a client's personal life with her. He also contends that Ms. Kelley tried unsuccessfully to get information from him for her first book, an unauthorized biography of Sinatra. Rudin contends that Ms. Kelley knew he wouldn't help on a Nancy Reagan book, so she hired a researcher to try to get information from Rudin under false pretenses.

Violent crimes jump 10 per cent in U.S.

WASHINGTON (R) — Violent crimes in the United States jumped 10 per cent in 1990, continuing a six-year surge fueled by more murders and a wave of drug-related incidents, the government's top law enforcement agency has reported. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) said its preliminary annual statistics, compiled from police around the country, showed all offences in the violent crime category posting sharp increases last year. Murder and aggravated assaults both soared 10 per cent, rape went up nine per cent and robberies jumped 11 per cent, the FBI said. The figures marked the sixth straight year the overall crime rate rose in a trend which experts attributed largely to more drug-related violence across the United States, where crime rates run much higher than in other Western democracies. The numbers represented a setback for the President George Bush's administration, which has been trying to get Congress to pass the White House's anti-crime package. "Today's FBI report confirms that the bloodshed and mayhem on our streets are out of control," said Senator Joseph Biden, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and a frequent critic of Bush's anti-crime proposals.

Bush to get Churchill Award

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. President George Bush will receive the Winston Churchill Award from Queen Elizabeth at a White House ceremony on May 14 during her visit to the United States. The Winston Churchill Foundation of the United States said Thursday. "President Bush demonstrated Churchillian leadership in mobilising the world community to unite in repelling Iraq's invasion of Kuwait," John L. Loeb Jr., president of the foundation, said in a statement. Other recipients of the award were the late U.S. Ambassador Averell Harriman, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, businessman Ross Perot and former U.S. President Ronald Reagan.